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VOL. 4. - No 16



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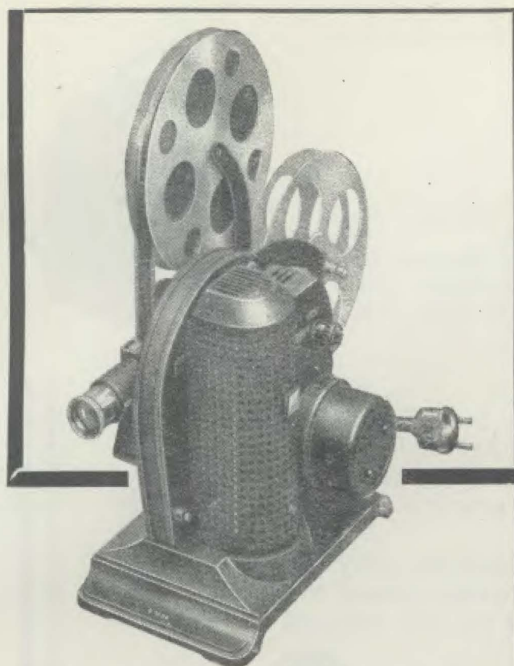
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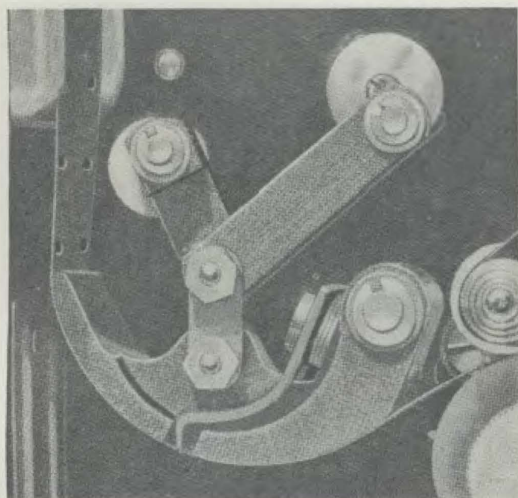
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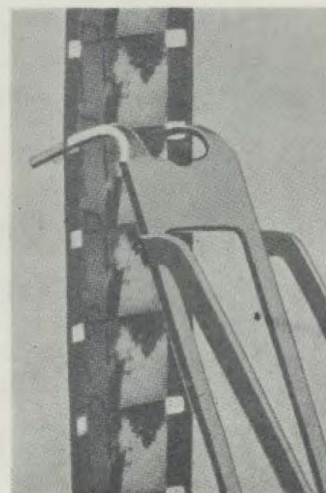
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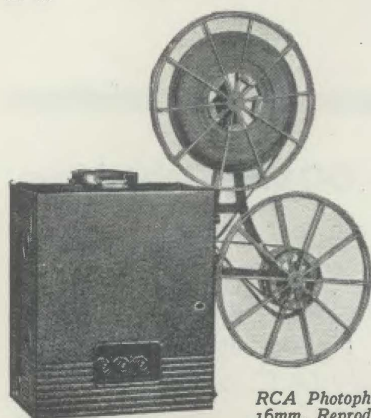
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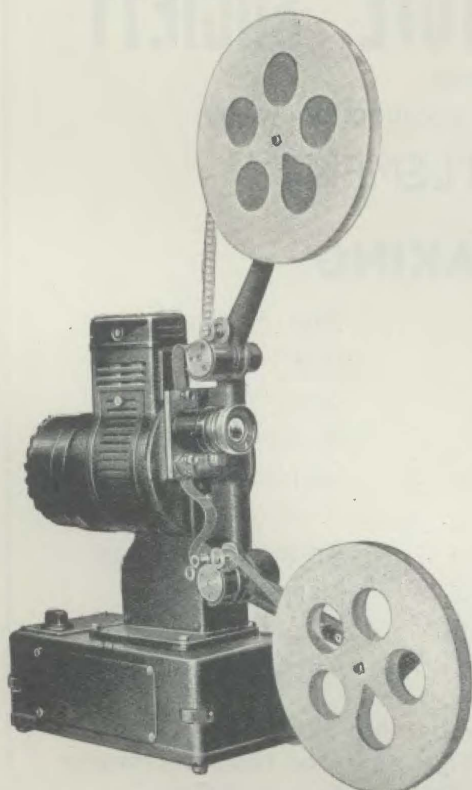
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FILMS AND THE SCHOOL : A SECTION FOR EDUCATIONISTS.

HOME-MADE DIAGRAM FILMS, by H. D. Waley ; USING THE FILM IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL, by H. Houghton ; WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EDUCATIONAL FILM ? by Max Kaufmann ;
HOW TO USE CLASSROOM FILMS, by J. A. Lauwerys. Pages 182-191.

THE ENTERTAINMENT FILM

FOR more than a century the Royal Statistical Society has gathered facts about the many aspects of the national life, yet until Mr. Rowson's "Statistical Survey of the Cinema Industry in Great Britain in 1934"* it has not attempted to deal with the recreation or entertainment of the British people. Mr. Rowson's lucid analysis brings statistical evidence to show the extent of the cinema's popularity as a form of entertainment to-day.

In the first place 957 million people, an average of 18½ millions per week, paid £40,950,000 for admission to cinemas in 1934 ; the average price of a seat was 10.3d. At the end of 1934 there were 4,305 cinemas with a total of 3,872,000

seats. These figures are striking evidence of the vast scope of the industry and justify the description of the cinema as one of the sociological wonders of the century. Since 1932, 302 new cinemas have been built with an average of 1,160 seats per house. Mr. Rowson's findings support the views expressed by trade leaders that the problem of redundancy or overbuilding will become more and more serious unless the balance can be redressed by a national drive to bring new cinemagoers to support the increasing number of cinemas.

It is reasonable to suggest that, in order to attract that further support, cinemas might cater more than they do for those filmgoers who not only expect better

*Read to the Royal Statistical Society on 17th December, 1935.

films, but who wish to discriminate between the films they go to see.

The policy of the British Film Institute has been to recognise this desire and to facilitate its expression. One of the first things which discriminating filmgoers throughout the country require is reliable information and critical appraisals of the hundreds of films presented for their entertainment. The Monthly Film Bulletin, published by the Institute, is an attempt to meet this demand. So far as is possible every film is reviewed when it is first shown or presented for the first time in London; on an average, reviews of fifty full length entertainment films are published each month. The object of these reviews is to provide filmgoers with information which will help them to decide which films they wish to see; sufficient information is given to enable the reader to know what type of film it is and whether it is an outstanding film of that type by reason of the treatment, direction, settings, photography and acting.

In addition to distinguishing between outstanding and ordinary films in the various familiar categories, it is possible to distinguish from all the films which are produced to entertain filmgoers those films which also have a distinct educational and cultural value. The Institute, after consultation with the Film Censorship Consultative Committee of the Home Office has worked out a scheme for the award of Vouchers of Approval to such films, in the belief that their social importance demands recognition and that increased production and exhibition of such films would be an attraction to certain sections of the public whose support would assist in maintaining and raising the level of cinema entertainment.

Specialist and repertory cinemas, which are at present almost entirely confined to London, and the film societies and branches of the Institute throughout the country are endeavouring to cater for those who wish to be discriminating in their filmgoing. The influence of such filmgoers is not limited to the support which they afford to the specialist cinemas

and film societies, but is also effective in promoting support for the film producers who wish to improve the quality and experiment in the making of films for the ordinary cinemas. Exhibitions of experimental and continental films, the publication of local film guides such as that published by the London branch of the Institute drawing attention to the best and important films being shown during the month, the arrangement of lectures by film technicians, artists and critics, and the work of the amateur cinematographers—all these are important and significant activities to which the Institute is giving direct and indirect assistance.

The National Film Library has an obvious and important contribution to make to all these activities. It was established for two purposes: to preserve copies of important films for posterity and, whenever and in so far as it is possible, to make them available to specialist audiences after their commercial potentialities have been exhausted; and, on the other hand, to collect and distribute films of educational and cultural value which are not produced for commercial distribution. Already, as it is announced elsewhere, a considerable number of films have been presented to the Library. Requests from organisations throughout the country wishing to borrow films are being received continually and hope has been expressed that the Library will be able to provide representative programmes of British films for exhibition abroad by societies formed to promote better understanding between this country and other countries.

In face of the problems which the entertainment film presents the Institute has continually turned its attention to constructive methods of creating and satisfying the demand for better entertainment films. These methods may be unspectacular, and progress may be slower than that already made in the field of the educational film, but the results which are achieved by such methods will be sound and will benefit both cinemagoers and cinema trade alike.

NOTES OF THE QUARTER

British Film Successes at Brussels Film Festival

Great Britain seems to have carried off most of the prizes awarded for documentary films, at the International Film Festival held during the Brussels Exhibition.

The prize for the best documentary went to the *Song of Ceylon*, a Grierson-Wright production. Three other English documentary films *Coal Face* (John Grierson), *B.B.C. Voice of Britain* (John Grierson and Stuart Legg), *The Face of Britain* (Paul Rotha) were awarded medals of honour. The Alberteum prize for the best scientific film was gained by England with its production *The Sea Urchin* (G.-B. Instructional), and medals of honour were awarded to *The Amoeba* and *Blowfly*, also made by G.-B. Instructional.

In addition, *Sanders of the River* made by London Film Productions and directed by Zoltan Korda gained the grand medal of honour for the best photographic production, and the prize for a fantasy film was awarded to *Colour Box*, Len Lye's colour abstract film made by the G.P.O. Film Unit as propaganda for cheaper parcel post..

Other interesting awards were the special town of Brussels prize which went to *Escape Me Never*, the Grand Prix du Roi which was presented to *The Informer*, as the best dramatic film, the grand medal of honour for the best scenario which was gained by *The Scoundrel* (America) and the grand medal of honour for the best musical score which was awarded to *L'Equipage* (France). The Plateau prizes offered by the Belgian Cinematographic Press Association for the best animated drawings were awarded to the Walt Disney films *The Band Concert* and *Who Killed Cock Robin*?

"Non-Flam" Films

The Surrey County Council has adopted special regulations for the use of "non-flam" films.

It contends (a) that there is no such thing as "non-flam" film, (b) that therefore so-called "non-flam" films come within the 1909 Act whose provisions govern the exhibition of inflammable films, (c) that the control exercised by the licensing authority over inflammable film, according to the terms of the Act, is thus also operative in the case of so-called "non-flam" films.

A series of recommendations governing the granting of licences in respect of "non-flam" films were, therefore, drafted by the Surrey Licensing Committee. On November 26th the Surrey County Council adopted the recommendations, and in future the so-called "non-flam" films will be subject to these special conditions.

The main rules are as follows:

That only so-called non-inflammable films are used.
That only portable self-contained projectors are used.
That no film shall be shown which is likely to be injurious to morality, or to encourage or incite to crime, or to lead to disorder, or to be offensive to public feeling or which contains any offensive representations of living persons.

Fire appliances suitable to the character of the building and adequate to deal with an outbreak of fire shall be provided and maintained in good working order. During the exhibition such appliances shall be in the charge of some person specially nominated for that purpose, who shall see that they are kept constantly available for use.

The Council shall be the sole judge as to whether any film is "non-inflammable," and their decision shall be final.

It is understood that in the case of the exhibition of so-called "non-flam" films in schools for educational purposes, the audience consisting of school children under the immediate supervision and control of their teachers, adequate exits, properly constructed projector apparatus, and satisfactory electric wiring would seem to give all essential requirements.

The Cinema quotes as follows the statement of an official of the Surrey County Council:

"The Cinematograph Act provides for regulations only for films which are inflammable. If there is such a thing as non-inflammable film, then, of course, we have no jurisdiction; but we have never come across film that is non-inflammable; and we contend that we have authority over so-called 'non-flam' film under the 1909 Act because it does, in fact, burn. That permits us to lay down these special regulations, which will permit the showing of so-called 'non-flam' films in suitable buildings under properly controlled conditions."

"These conditions will include censorship as for ordinary films, with the category board condition."

The Kinematograph Weekly quotes the following statement of the attitude of the Surrey County Council:

"The Surrey cinema proprietors, of course, are in favour of our action. What we are seeking to do is to get control, by means of licences, granted on conditions to which these owners subscribe, of the many non-commercial exhibitions of films in places such as schools, churches and village halls, which are run by persons inadequately equipped with technical knowledge and proper apparatus."

The Film Industry and the Combines

"We have witnessed the ever-increasing strength of the combines until to-day I make bold to say that it is next to impossible for an independent concern to live in competition with the mammoth combines that control the industry."

Sir Gordon Craig was addressing an extraordinary meeting of New Era Pictures, called for the purpose of passing a resolution that the company should

go into voluntary liquidation, when he made this statement which foreshadows a time when there will be no independent companies in the film industry—only a few big combines.

During the first year of the company's activities the change from silent to talkie pictures came, and as a result, said Sir Gordon Craig, they found themselves with capital invested in merchandise that, almost over-night, became a dead loss. They had carried on in the hope of resuscitation, but the strength of the combines had become too much for them.

Road Safety Propaganda

In a recent issue of SIGHT AND SOUND, a message from Mr. Hore Belisha was published in which he emphasised the value of the film as a medium of "road safety" propaganda. We therefore learn with interest that a film directed by Paul Rotha and called *Death on the Road* has just been completed in which Mr. Hore Belisha himself takes part. He makes an energetic speech demanding public support and attention, both for the film itself and general road safety propaganda. His speech accompanies a series of camera sequences illustrating the dangers of the road. Scenes of accidents, etc., were made under close personal supervision of Ministry of Transport officials.

NATIONAL FILM LIBRARY AND LUMIÈRE CELEBRATIONS

BRITAIN'S first cinematograph show will be repeated at the Polytechnic, Regent Street, on Thursday, 20th February, when M. Louis Lumière

will be present at the re-enactment of the original entertainment presented by himself forty years ago. It was on the 20th February, 1896, that the event took place, and the contemporary *Polytechnic Magazine* describes the new invention thus:

"It is briefly living photography, if this term may be used, thrown on a screen in the same way as are dissolving views by the oxyhydrogen lantern. The effect is really most wonderful.

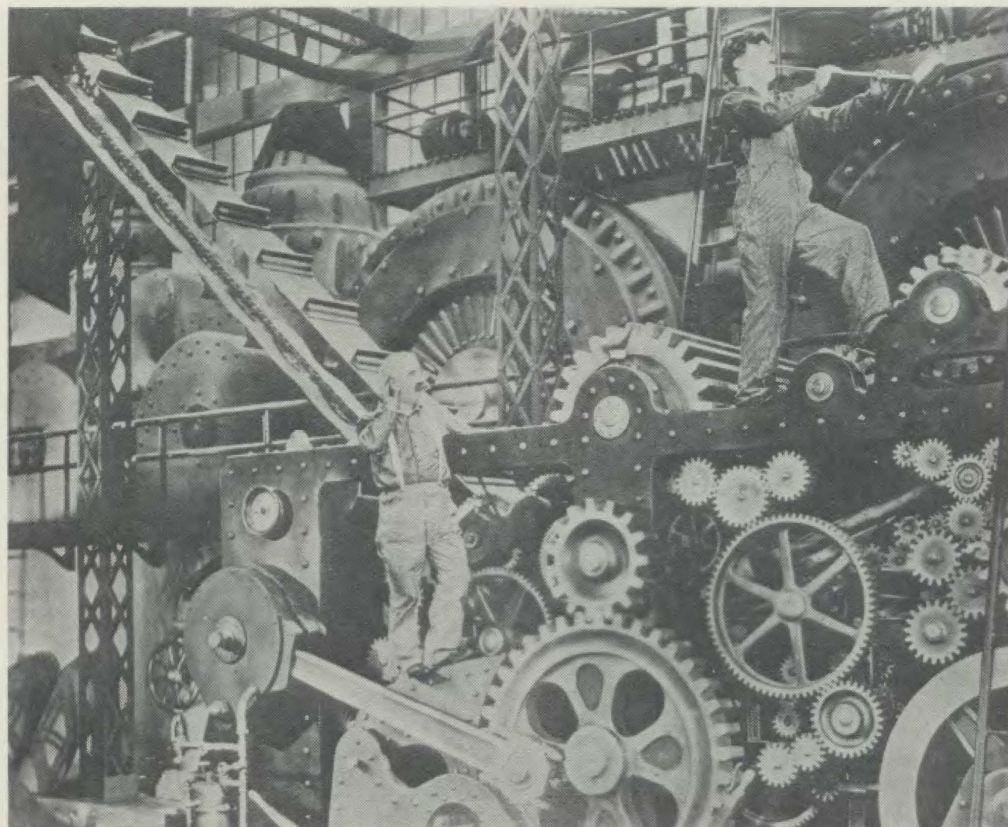
"For instance, the photograph of a railway station is shown on the screen, two or three seconds elapse and a train steams into the station and stops, the carriage doors open, the people get out, and there is the usual hurrying and scurrying for a second or two, and then again the train moves off. The whole thing is realistic, and is, as a matter of fact, an actual photograph."

Already France, Belgium and Holland have honoured M. Lumière.

It is intended by the Polytechnic that the celebration shall take the form of a two days' exhibition devoted to a display of the varied cinematograph apparatus incidental to the development of moving pictures, lent by Mr. Wilfred E. L. Day, who, in addition, has undertaken to present the actual twelve films originally shown by M. Lumière forty years ago, on the projector used on that occasion.

As we go to Press, plans are being made for the National Film Library to participate in the event by the organisation of a demonstration of historical films on the second day of the exhibition. Full details of this demonstration, which promises to be an event of outstanding importance in the coming year, will soon be available.

Among other leading features of the Polytechnic Exhibition will be a display of the latest cinematograph equipment, and screen shows are also being arranged by well known studios. (See also page 193, *Hommage à Louis Lumière*).



Charlie Chaplin in his new film shortly to be shown in London, *MODERN TIMES* (United Artists)

ART AND THE ANALYSTS

NOTES ON THE VALUATION FACTOR IN CRITICISM

By John Grierson

A NEW book on cinema has appeared recently which, in its title, makes a bid for precision no previous book has attempted. Mr. Arnheim was content with *Film*, Mr. Rotha with *Celluloid* and Miss Lejeune with *Cinema*. This new book is a full *Grammar of the Film*.^{*} It is by Mr. R. J. Spottiswoode, a young man recently down from Oxford, and now an apprentice in actual production. Mr. Spottiswoode confesses that the book was written before he had touched a foot of film, but a book on the nature of art may be none the worse for such lack of practice. If the artist's or philosopher's mind is there, the more esoteric knowledge of the cutting bench and the studio is superfluous. It is doubtful if Kant, when he wrote the *Critique of Judgment* was expert in any one of the arts, and his single æsthetic reaction seems to have been to the organ next door; yet his *Critique* is still the mainstay of serious æsthetic. The only importance of Mr. Spottiswoode's confession is that it reflects a youthful orientation toward the practice of cinema, which seriously influences the grammar as a grammar. He is, in fact, not a grammarian at all, but a young man trying to work out the principles of cinema, so that he may be a good director. As is natural, he concentrates on the actual details of film manipulation and not in the last resort on the art of cinema.

Analysing the art of cinema

A great many young men want to be directors nowadays, and they are bound to find that this analysis from scratch reflects their own immediate needs. It is a first tutor. That is the service and the limitation of the book. The setting of the camera, the different methods of montage, fades, wipes, dissolves, colour and the different classes of synchronisation, are all set down in earnest description and analysis. One may feel sometimes that the words are a little long and that not even the longer word explains the issue at stake, but a grammar must at all costs try to be methodical, and the fault is on the right side. We have had many books on cinema, all of them reflecting the first bright efforts of criticism to catch this new art on the wing. Some, like Mr. Rotha's, have reflected the history and the movements. Some, like Mr. Arnheim's and Mr. Pudovkin's, have reflected the preoccupations of a particular period of development. None before has tried to anatomise cinema.

The curse of anatomy, of course, is that you must first kill the body you are going to work on. The atmosphere of the mortuary is not absent from Mr. Spottiswoode's book. Cinema is no longer on

the wing or caught in the bright flashes of its occasional inspiration. It is on the cold and horrid slab in process of dissection as to viscera and nerve fibres, but the real factor in the situation is that the subject is stone dead.

Can art really be anatomised? Can analysis, however laborious, catch the life of the thing? Is the judgment of taste not a consideration of harmonies and purposes, which defeat analysis and demand in the critic a recreating inspiration of his own? Looking at Mr. Spottiswoode's book, there are a great many points which bring these questions to the mind. The examples of ideal method, for instance, are frequently dull. Mr. Spottiswoode, in a foreword, warns me off in the matter of examples, saying (*pace* Grierson) "they are not intended to exhaust the instances of the laws they illustrate"; but if the laws of, say, a grammar of poetry do not hold the virtue of Shakespeare, if they do not even suggest the virtue of Shakespeare, they are the less laws for that. In the consideration of technical matters, I make no complaint. Mr. Spottiswoode puts down his case for the camera or the dissolve or the wipe with much sensible consideration. It is in the fields of montage and sound beyond, where real creation lies, that I feel the grammar business breaking down. I cannot catch the accent of appreciation (or *valuation*) and I feel we ought to if the laws are to be real laws. They must reflect, somehow, what I and others have felt in not so much a good piece of cutting by Eisenstein or Pudovkin or Wright, as in a good piece of *film* by Eisenstein or Pudovkin or Wright. The laws must be laws of the living and of the living film.

This is a distinction of importance. It is recorded of Leonardo that he once worked out a foolproof system for good painting. The points of emphasis were produced geometrically, the colours were fixed and the very mixing of the paint was mechanised, but when asked why he did not use the system himself, he replied that he left that to the apprentices. For my part, I find these principles of montage as far away from good film. I even begin to suspect that there is no such thing as a law of montage: there is only this new art of film, finding new material every day, and new forms and combinations as the material and the sensibility of the artist dictate. Some day maybe the art of cinema will grow up, and we shall know what it is all about; but that is a long way ahead. Any laws we may now lay down in its infant growth can hardly fit its maturity.

What, then, may we expect of our books on cinema? I have asked the question often enough, only to

^{*}A *Grammar of the Film*, Faber & Faber, 10/6.



AERO-ENGINE (Grierson-Elton). Reproduced from Spottiswoode's book, *A Grammar of the Film*, to which Mr. Grierson refers in this article

realise how the problems of yesterday are the acceptances of to-day and the achievements of to-day the clichés of to-morrow. But it may be worth while attempting an answer and particularly in a journal like *SIGHT AND SOUND*. It represents a growing body of men and women who are, in the best sense, interested in cinema as an art, who have, for the most part, come in grudgingly from the certainties of music and painting and poetry to realise that this guttersnipe of a few years ago may be a lad of parts. With the film societies in the lead, they appreciate the difference of Disney and the superiority of Flaherty and they have begun to be kind to the documentary film. The process, I know, has not gone far. One has a mild suspicion in the film societies that the beating heart of the advanced and cultured warms more easily to Disney than to Pudovkin. Only a week ago I got from one film society a protest on *Zero de Conduite* which I shall long remember. Forgetting Butler's *Discobolus*, I had foolishly advised it for the good and noble thing I believe it to be (and anyone who knew Jean Vigo had reason to recognise nobility). All I got for my pains was the comment that it was "tripe—and dirty tripe at that." But these very difficulties in the further reaches of cinema are inevitable, and only reflect the growing need for better and more serious guides to appreciation.

Economics of cinema

In the first place, we must ask our writers to discuss economics. There is a great deal of touching but untutored hope among the amateurs of cinema. Some teachers regard it as slowly nearing the high position of literature, and the "art of the motion

picture" is already a subject at American universities. But what if these hopes of Hollywood and Elstree are fundamentally—in the economics of cinema—misplaced? I put the point because only in comedy and in occasional epic have I seen any art in the commercial cinema; and it is a naive and trammelled art unfit for serious discussion alongside the comedy and epic of literature. Do the financial considerations allow and what do they allow? That is the first question our writers must answer, for on their answer we shall know what to expect. We shall know why film comedy falls short of satire and why film epic is so invariably distant. We shall, in fact, more precisely appreciate the *quality* of commercial cinema. We shall more clearly distinguish its fine technical achievements from the poverty of its themes. We shall even learn why film history has to be romantic or comic, or merely de Mille to be possible, and why the lives of our kings run to private lives and never to public ones. If we pursue the higher economics we shall learn why cinema so invariably and so inevitably misses reality.

Such a study would represent, of course, only a first lesson in the art of cinema, but it would at least tell us what the art of cinema is not. It would free us from these false hopes and these foolish ardours of reform. Save always in comedy and epic, it would teach us to look elsewhere and build elsewhere if a serious art of cinema is to be realised.

Film and the social environment

There is a second perspective we must ask our writers to follow up if they are to explain the art to us. They must talk about the social structure into which this art has so miraculously been born, of the capacity of the camera and the microphone to describe the extravagant world in which we live. They must describe the vitality of the medium not in kinds of montage but in kinds of social problem: marking in every gangster film or documentary film or near-documentary (like *Turn of the Tide* and *Man of Aran*) the social outlook which

invests the work. Only thereby will the special quality of the mind behind the camera, and therefore of the camera itself, be revealed.

You may bet on it every director has his social orientation in a time like this, for good or evil, for creation or chaos. It affects his camera and his microphone and the virtue of his art. Where he shies, they shy. Where he takes hold and speaks like Sidney out of his heart, they leap to serve him and grow in his hands to greater purpose. Advances in technique can be explained in no other way. On such a guide, much that is at present misunderstood would stand clear. If the social outlook is adventurous, it carries the art of cinema inevitably to new material and new problems of form. It measures the quality and the necessity of experiment. The writers must describe to us the nature of that necessity. They must tell us why in documentary, say (I choose the nearest example), the co-operation of the poet and the composer have been sought and why the first results are bound to lack in articulation; or why one branch of documentary is breaking away to the simplicity of direct journalism. In noting the points of failure, they must the more certainly emphasise the purposes which make failure possible. Pudovkin's *A Simple Case* was unanimously despised by the critics, yet its failure created *Deserter*. Understand such points as these and one is on a way to appreciate in the fullest sense the work of the great directors. It is the material of the social process which is dictating every turn and twist of cinema, even of commercial cinema. To describe it in the old romantic terms of art and the search for beauty is childish. The process is the simpler and more necessarily one of articulating one's world—in its dreams and in its drama. Many of the dreams are trivial and the drama does not always reflect the true growing point of the social process, but the direct relationship of a work of art is always there, for the critic to define and measure in quality. Indeed, at that point the writer must not talk cinema, but civics, and to do so he must talk themes, themes, and themes again. In *Turn of the Tide*, say, he must discuss the principle of village co-operation and indicate how far the depth of the principle is sounded. For the film is affected in both its authenticity and its technique. He must in a film like *Gabriel Over the White House* discuss the principle of benevolent despotism and its relation to economics, for again the authenticity of the film and the depths of its going are affected. He must look to the nature of the theme in *Deserter* and tell you its place in Pudovkin's own political development and in Russia's story of reconstruction, that its tangled and halting but still heroic continuity may be the better appreciated.

Interpretation and appreciation

The economic basis and the social implication do not, of course, tell the whole story. The bird is still on the wing and flying even higher, and the writer must attempt to follow it. There is a simple but

satisfactory sequence in *Ceylon* in which two or three relatively insignificant birds fly across the sky and herald the dawn of Buddha with a mad flurry of bells ringing quite irrationally behind them. One remembers great moments of Chaplin or of Pudovkin, or of the much maligned *Zéro de Conduite* which, in the same sense, are cinema *tout simple*. Here the writer has a more difficult task. In the case of Chaplin he can talk of mask and the philosophy implicit in Chaplin's comedy and the logic of that comedy. In the case of Pudovkin he can talk of the fervour of Communism and the heroism of revolution, or he can talk, as he well might, of poetic image. And if he invests his description of philosophy or poetic image with, for a moment, the mind of a philosopher or a poet, he may turn the trick and bring the outside nearer to the heart of appreciation. Here, for example, is the answer that Cavalcanti wrote to the protest on *Zéro de Conduite*:

"I gather that some of your members find the film irrational. Presumably they refer to certain unrealistic scenes, the slow motion procession through the dormitory, for instance. Now supposing anyone had seen children ragging in a dormitory it surely would not be irrational to describe it like this: 'The white sheets thrown back over the beds, the pillows scattered on the floor, the white nightdresses of the children gave the impression of a winter landscape, the feathers fluttering behind had the unearthly air of ghosts, and when the procession itself was formed with a child raised on the shoulders of the others, it had both the solemnity of a Catholic rite and the mocking gaiety of a Bacchanal.' I do not suppose any of your members if they were to come on such a description as this in a book, would find it difficult to understand, so I do not see why they should make difficulties when they see an equivalent description on the cinema."

That, I submit, is where the analyst becomes also interpreter. In such cases, the writer can only approximate to explanation. His explanation may be a better work of art than the original, and often has been, or it may be worse: it cannot expect to be in spirit identical. But if a poet of whatever medium is discussing poetry and an artist of whatever medium is discussing art, there is good chance that something of the spirit of the original will be conveyed. Nothing less than the creative word will serve, even in criticism. One may note a similar issue at this moment in the theory of education. With the educational process lagging far behind the social process, educationalists make desperate efforts to increase the information doled out to their children. From my own youth I remember the daily reading of the *London Times* as a necessary if grim exercise in the pursuit of knowledge. To-day the policy is intensified. Children are rushed off to see this factory and that, and a broadcasting service for schools pumps their little heads with still more knowledge of a rather wide, wide world. Films tell them in detail of manufacturing processes, and in detail of how this is grown and that is canned. Yet, somehow, the life of our time escapes through the sieve of fact and analysis. Interpretation is wanted, and this also is a matter for the artist. In education as in criticism the creative word must be added to the analytic word if the process is to be a vital one.

REMARKS ON THE COLOUR FILM

By Rudolf Arnheim, Author of *Film*

Translated from the German by F. G. Renier

ALL the tones which build up the black and white image can be arranged in a one-dimensional series, which, from black, leads to white through all degrees of grey. Every image of this nature might be represented as a relief in which the highest points express the whites, the lowest the blacks. In the case of the coloured picture such a peak and valley representation could not be used; for, in the coloured image, we have nearly always several systems of tone-scales running beside and through each other, the key-notes of which are a fundamental colour or often a mixed colour. Two types of these one-dimensional tone-scales are possible; let us call them quantitative and qualitative scales: firstly, scales of brightness (quantitative), in which a definite basic or a mixed colour is brought from its darkest to its brightest values, thus, *e.g.*, dark blue to light blue; secondly, mixed colour scales (qualitative), leading from one colour tone to another, *e.g.*, from yellow to red *via* yellow-red and red-yellow.

Equality, contrast and relationship

From the black and white film we know that two tones can be equal, related or greatly differing, according to their relative nearness in the tone-scale.

Equality serves:—

- 1 To produce a uniform plane (*e.g.*, a uni-coloured sky);
- 2 To express a similarity of content of several objects (*e.g.*, the black widow and the little black dog in Lubitsch's *Merry Widow*);

- 3 To cause two objects to melt into one another (*e.g.*, a black garment against a black background).

Contrast serves:—

- 1 To make one object stand out against another (*e.g.*, dark garment against white background);
- 2 To make subdivisions within one object (*e.g.*, the black and white striped frocks in *Madchen in Uniform*).

Relationship serves:—

- 1 To bring out the different shadings within the object itself;
- 2 To make two objects stand apart from each other neither by extreme similarity nor by extreme contrast.

In the black and white film there is but one way to achieve extreme contrast: the difference between black and white. In the coloured image there are as many extreme contrasts as there are basic colours. If we accept three basic colours (authorities do not agree on this subject), there are three pairs of contrasts: blue-yellow, blue-red, yellow-red. And, moreover, contrasts by means of extremes of brightness.

From this it follows that in the black and white film an object can then only be extremely contrasted with the rest of the image when this rest is very homogeneous, *e.g.*, the dark widow and the little

dog only on a homogeneously white background. In the coloured image, however, an object can be made to stand out also when there are still further contrasts within the image, *e.g.*, a girl dressed in red in a landscape with a blue sky, green trees and



A scene from *MADCHEN IN UNIFORM* (Film Society) to which Arnheim refers above. The film is directed by Leontine Sagan

yellow fields. The clear standing out of an object—a principal factor in optic dramaturgy—loses thereby much of its violence: the severity of the contrast is removed when it can be divided into more than two fundamental types and, as it were, stretch out into several dimensions. It can be done on the same level of brightness, and hence is not in need of contrasts of brightness. Whereas in the black and white film there are but two extreme types (black and white) the colour film has as many as there are basic colours, and moreover, the introduction of mixed colours does not necessarily bring (as it does in the case of black and white film) a weakening of the contrast with it: *e.g.*, red against all tones of the series, blue—blue green—green blue—yellow green—yellow.

Possibility of discord

As the possibility that two objects have the same tone in the colour film is narrowed down, colour causes a considerable enlargement of the grammar of optics, from which it follows on the one side that much more complicated relations between several objects can be expressed in the image, on the other side, however, that the composition of the image becomes an enormously heavier task. It enters into the field of polyphony—a comparison only approximately correct. The possibility of discords arises.

Within a single optic tone scale, no discord seems to be possible, as all its single notes have an equal function—thus differing from the musical tone scale: there are neither dominants nor sub-dominants. Hence, in the black and white image, there arise no discords, even in the case of haphazard arrangements, but only errors in the composition and then only as regards the spatial distribution of the image. The same would apply, it seems to us, in the case of a coloured image contained within a single scale of brightness (*e.g.*, all shades between light blue and dark blue) or a qualitative scale (*e.g.*, all shades between blue and red); and probably also for an image only based on basic colours (supposing that these too, have an equal function among each other). If, on the other hand, one introduces mixed colours—and this is nearly always done—into one's colour-system, then the possibility of a discord arises, and probably for this reason, now that the relation between two tones can cover more than one or two basic tones and hence loses its one-dimensionality: *e.g.*, such a relation can now contain both equality and contrast at the same time: orange (=red plus yellow) and violet (=red plus blue). The harmonic laws of colour have, notwithstanding manifold attempts (Goethe, Ostwald), not yet been convincingly formulated; but the eye gifted with a sense of colour follows them instinctively, whereas the one lacking in it stands but little chance of complying with them accidentally. (No mention at all has been made of size, shape and distribution of colour planes and of the objects represented by the image—factors which not only complicate the composition still further, but possibly also influence the colour harmonies!)

* * *

People of taste have considered the colours in the colour film atrocious; many have thought them unnatural. That can only mean that either the colours in the film are as awful as they are in nature, or that they are beautiful in nature, but made horrible in the film. If we make an experiment and place a young girl in the sun and look at her image on the frosted glass slide of the camera, what we see there looks remarkably like the images of the colour film. All tones seem exaggerated, inharmonious, the girl obtrusively made up, the entire picture common and meaningless. Now consider a good painting in the same way—its result on the frosted glass is unaltered in its beauty. From which follows: the fault lies not, as is so often argued, with the colour film technicians (even when as at present they do not perfectly fulfil their task). The reason is not physical, but psychological: as soon as a piece of nature becomes an image, we consider it with different eyes. (The reduction of the plastic into planes may have some bearing on this). It seems that we consider it like a painting and, therefore, require different values.

When I had seen my first colour film and left the cinema, I had a terrible experience—I saw the world as a coloured film. The Alban hills stood, a common soft lilac colour behind the chain of dark green pines, topped by an emerald green sky—everything was blatant in its poisonous colour, and gave a chaotic, fiendish, discordant picture. This lasted a few minutes, and then, without the light having really changed, my usual evening landscape was there again in all its placidity: the far-off mountains, the solemn trees, the Roman sky in the last light of day.

Nature and art

Nature is beautiful, but not in the same sense as art. Her colour combinations are accidental and hence usually inharmonious. Where accidentally she seems to indicate an interesting, harmonious motif, the painter can seize upon it and realise it. That is to say, specify the similarities, contrasts and relationships; subordinate to the one leading motif all the rest. From this system of relationships which includes also the emotional qualities of colours, described by Goethe as their physico-moral (*sinnlich-sittlich*) action, there arises a characteristic, unambiguous representation of the object. There will be order, clarity at a glance, and, as the colours serve the object, they are no longer seen as colour blobs. We have become used to seeing a painting as a structure full of meaning; hence our helplessness, our intense shock on seeing the majority of colour-photographs. We do not find any form in them, neither can we decide to see them as nature.

The "practical" sense of seeing is but a means for man to find his way in his surroundings. Colours help him to distinguish objects and make them stand out against each other. Hence the interest is directed on single objects, not on the relationships between their optic appearances. The entire visual "image" is biologically valueless, hence we



A contrast in light and shadow. A scene with Peter Lorre and Marian Marsh from *CRIME AND PUNISHMENT*, directed by Joseph von Sternberg (Columbia)

see neither harmony nor discord. It is only the æsthetic way of seeing (not to be confused with "delight in nature") that gives this elementary basis for all optic forms of art.

Conclusion

The colour confusion in the colour film, the disturbing prominence of single tones, the difficulty of seeing the images at a glance, the diversion from the object because of colour have at the most secondary technical reasons. The main reason is the "naturalness," the lack of form. The often-recommended toning down of all colours is no solution; neither ought one to become un-naturalistic to obtain form. Why, in good paintings, do faces much more brightly coloured than those in the colour film not seem unnatural? Why do even pure reds not stand out as disturbing elements? Because in paintings every colour has its place in a system of colours and shapes, which forms a correct balance of intensities; because intensities and sizes of surfaces stand in a correct relationship to each other; because there are no colourless, characterless tones. Why do the colours not distract the attention from the object? Because they have been so chosen as to be subservient

to it. Why can the painting be taken in at a glance? Because contrasts, equalities and relationships have been made subservient to the object; because the greatest intensities are where the object demands the accent. And why, in the colour film, do we usually observe the opposite? Because the art of directing the mechanical process has not yet been discovered.

Whether the problem is in any way open to a solution in the case of a documentary film for which all tones are determined beforehand, seems doubtful

to me. That it might be solved much better than it has so far been done in the studio film, in which there is a great latitude in the use of colour, seems to me beyond doubt. To this end, of course, every scene must be built up from shapes and colours right from the beginning, and the shooting script be based on colour motives. Not, as is the present grotesque habit, make a colour specialist subsequently put colour into a scene already put down as action in the shooting script and by the director as bodily shapes and movements.¹ On the above-mentioned reasons, it is certain that the colour film, even in the case of a more reasonable method of production, demands a much greater artistic feeling to attain a bearable result. And hence, when Raymond Spottiswoode, in his recently published book, says: "Colour may well raise the standard of poor films; but the better the film the smaller will be the gain," we are convinced of the exact opposite.

¹Natalie M. Kalmus, Colour Director of Technicolor: "In the preparation of a picture we read the script and prepare a colour chart for the entire production, each scene, sequence, set, and character being considered. This chart may be compared to a musical score, and amplifies the picture in a similar manner." (*Journal of the S.M.P.E.*, August, 1935.)

FILM AND LITERATURE

By W. E. Williams, Secretary, British Institute of Adult Education

Mr. Williams, Editor of *The Highway*, suggests in this article that there are certain elements in literature which cannot be interpreted upon the screen, and he discusses the filming of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in the light of what he considers to be the limitations and potentialities of the film.

REINHARDT'S attempt to transpose *A Midsummer Night's Dream* into cinema should perhaps be regarded as an experiment rather than as an achievement. It is not, of course, the first time that the attempt has been made to interpret "literature" into film-idiom; but it raises more sharply than usual the question: "How full can this interpretation be?" In some ways the analogy of translation from one language into another helps us to see the difficulties involved in the process. Could you translate (into French, for example) this couplet from one of Shakespeare's sonnets?

And yet, by Heaven—I swear my love as fair
As any she belied with false compare.

Every language has constructions, shades of meaning, subtleties of association which simply refuse to be fully rendered in any other language; and the product which we call "literature" contains some elements, at least, which appear to resist all the resources of the cinema and are in short untranslatable into film-language.

If we consider the main modes of literature—the novel and the play—we shall agree that the cinema

can more effectively "render" some of their elements. The kind of novel which is primarily an assembly of incidents can be re-vitalised by cinematic interpretation. A story of adventure almost invariably gains in presentment when it is turned into film; it has a more breathless pace; it can devise more arresting juxtapositions of incident; it has a greater mobility. Similarly, a play which depends primarily on plot and event can be more impressively put over on the screen than on the stage.

Limitations of the film

But at this point we have to remember that the greatest novels and plays are not limited to the presentation of plot. That element constitutes their "outer life"; but they have, too, an "inner life." By this I mean that in a novel such as *David Copperfield*, or Conrad's *Lord Jim*, or Norman Douglas's *South Wind* there are—apart from the plot—other creative processes going on within the novel. We are admitted, for example, into the subterranean life of their characters—their concealed motives of conduct, their vacillations of will, their "complexes" and so on. We are also exposed to what may be called the "outlook" of the novelist: his evaluations of human behaviour, his theories of living. It is this sort of element, more than the construction of a "plot," which constitutes greatness in play or novel; and it is this element which proves so intractable to the cinema.



Some characters in *A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM*. From left to right: Olivia de Havilland and Dick Powell as Lysander and Hermia, Mickey Rooney as Puck, Frank McHugh and Hugh Herbert as Quince and Snout. Directed by Reinhardt (Warner Bros.)

I do not say that the cinema cannot incorporate some of these subtleties, or that it is of its nature limited to telling stories in pictures. Many times already a director of imagination has contrived to put more on the screen than the mere "story" of a novel or play; witness *Kameradschaft* with its delicacy and power of psychological portrayal; or *Berkeley Square*—a film which indeed subordinated the "story" element so much that many habitual film-goers failed to recognise that the film was for once trying to do more than record appearances; that it was probing into subtleties of psychology.

But I still feel that this process of the "inner life" of a piece of literature is one which cannot be rushed. And here the cinema is handicapped by those very factors which are its strength when it comes to simple story-telling. The job of evaluating human character in given situations must be a slow, deliberate one. When we come to the end of *David Copperfield* or *South Wind* we have been witnessing in its creation of character, in its communication of outlook, a process as slow and inevitable as the building-up of a coral reef by tropical insects. This deliberation of treatment, this generalising from thousands of instances, each trivial in itself, is a process alien to the quick-firing methods of the cinema. Cinema can readily enough reveal the high lights of human behaviour, the dramatic moments of hesitancy or decision in a character's life; but it cannot show that revealing detail which leads up to the big moments. It is in depth, then, in quality of penetration, that the cinema suffers by comparison with the novelist and at least with one kind of dramatist.

There is another limitation to be considered in this business of translating literature into cinema. Many plays and novels, apart from their pre-occupation with the inner life of their characters, consciously depend for their effect on the power of language. For most of us, most of the time, words are no more than the drudges of meaning; but for some of us more often, and for most people rarely, words become more than beasts of burden. They become little dynamos of association; they have some magic of sound or of suggestion which make them transmitters of imaginative vitality. When Antony says to Cleopatra, "I am dying, Egypt, dying," there is more than a communication of fact in the words. The "poetic" use of language, then, can be one of the great potencies of literature, whether in prose or in verse. Again, I do not for a moment deny that the cinema has a comparable idiom which can touch the imagination and can engender an imaginative excitement. For the moment I am saying only that there is an element of literature which may give trouble to those who are trying to render it in screen terms.

With these considerations in mind—the first, that literature is concerned with an inner as well as an outer life; the second, that literature (and especially poetry) often employs a verbal magic—what exactly is the problem confronting the film-director who is looking round for a novel or play to



The Pyramus and Thisbe play. A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM (Warner Bros.)

adapt? Who is likely to resist him for one or both of the reasons I have touched upon? What can the film-director make of Chekhov's *Cherry Orchard* or Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*? What can his quick-fire methods avail him here?

Reinhardt's experiment

And so, leaving gaps in the argument which I can only hope my readers will supply, to Reinhardt's problem. He could, of course, limit himself to a literal transcription of the text of *Midsummer Night's Dream*; simply copy the whole thing, words and all. But if he does that, if he allows (for example) the typical long speeches of Shakespeare to sit down in the fairway, what becomes of the cinema's most powerful attribute—its rapidity of presentation? As I see it, Reinhardt falls between two stools; or tries—and fails—to get the best of both worlds. He leaves most of the speeches unimpaired; and the effect of them on the screen is simply to make one feel they are out of place. All the brilliant mechanical resources of the cinema are immobilised on these occasions while the screen is copying out, as you may say, the words of Shakespeare. Reinhardt compromises; for, besides this ineffective transcription of the language he occasionally decides to call up his purely cinematic reserves. His camera can penetrate into the haunts of the forest elves; it can give a pretty good illusion of the fairy battalions deploying before Oberon and Titania. In short, it reduces to terms of realism that element which, in Shakespeare's play, is left to the imagination, or rather is fed to the imagination by Shakespeare's wizardry of language.

It is this very compromise, this timid effort to get the best of two incompatible worlds which (for me) makes Reinhardt's experiment a failure. Imaginative language is not the cinema's pigeon. The eloquence of the cinema is action, not language. It stultifies itself even further when it fails to make



Jean Muir as Helena, Ross Alexander as Demetrius, Victor Jory as Oberon

up its mind—as Reinhardt has failed—and when, besides giving us the words (badly declaimed, at that), it deviates into the attempt to enrich those verbal splendours with mechanical ingenuities. Left to communicate their own natural potency, the words can well sustain the illusion of fairy magic; but when they are accompanied by a translation into pictorial idiom, the illusion melts

and one is left with nothing but realistic incarnations of what was “more lissom in a dream.”

Shakespeare without words

What should Reinhardt have done? I believe that had he dared to be revolutionary he would have had a shot at Shakespeare without words; or with a minimum of words used as an occasional and brief orchestration of his action. Mechanised Shakespeare would have been a bold innovation; but it would have been a legitimate attempt to show how much of Shakespeare could be got across in a totally different idiom. It is the same old trouble. Since the cinema learned to talk it can't keep its mouth shut; and its new precocity of speech has made it forget much of that understanding of its real nature which, in the silent days, it had grown to learn.

To this quasi-cinematic treatment of Reinhardt's, Shakespeare is certainly impervious. There seem to be two alternatives. The first is to choose for the screen a Shakespeare play which is richer in action than in any other quality—say *Julius Caesar*—and to keep Shakespeare's powerful distractions of language as subdued as possible. The second is to recognise that some languages, for some purposes, are more powerful than others; and that Shakespeare is untranslatable into cinema. I believe I should prefer the second alternative.

R. P. S. ANNUAL COMPETITION FILM SHOW

THE Royal Photographic Society's show on November 16th of films sent in for their annual competition was full of interest. New features were the inclusion of an 8 mm. film and five colour films. Some apprehension was felt beforehand as to how 8 mm. film would look when enlarged to a 6-foot width, but it was agreed afterwards that it stood the test remarkably well. All three sizes (8 mm., 9.5 mm. and 16 mm.) were projected on the new Bolex G3, and it created a favourable impression.

It was unfortunate, however, that the colour films should have been shown so much enlarged when part of the audience were necessarily rather close to the screen, as the mosaic texture was painfully emphasised in this way. Both Kodacolor and Dufaycolor processes involve so much loss of definition that they sacrifice more than they gain unless the effects to be recorded be in the domain of colour rather than form. To say this is not to condemn them. It simply implies that they have the same limitations of range as, say, pastels have among the artist's resources. In these circumstances one might have expected to see amateur reels of mixed colour and black-and-white, the colour being reserved for the sequences seeming to demand it, but if any such were sent in they were not shown to us, and I believe that the idea is not one which at present finds many supporters. Possibly this is due to the prevalence of open-spool design in substandard cameras, which almost inevitably leads to a policy of finishing up the reel, rather than

reserving a certain type of film for certain picked shots. I believe that the popularity of colour film will soon lead to the popularity of the cassette.

The editing of the films showed a distinct advance on last year's level, though they still divided themselves rather sharply into those which had a plan and those which had not. G. H. Hesketh's *Slum Clearance*, M. Nathan's *Wood Craftsmen* and H. Freeman's *Living Cell* were good examples of planned composition. Mr. Nathan's film would, however, have benefited by fuller titling, and I could not help wondering what Mr. Freeman's object was in introducing at intervals close-up views of a teacher with his lips moving. G. C. Weston's riverside views seemed almost to set aside any theory as to the necessity for logical sequence, since their sheer visual beauty carried one on so pleasantly from point to point that one forgot to feel perplexed by any lack of general design. Stunt titling was in abeyance this year, and the only title I found irritating was one somewhere in the middle of a very diffuse holiday film, which read “Here, There and Everywhere.” What jarred was that there had hardly been a moment in the part of the film already shown to which the same title might not have been applied with equal appropriateness.

An interesting example of the new possibilities which fast film and fast lenses are opening up for the amateur was provided by S. E. French's studies of turns at the Olympia Circus.

H. D. W.

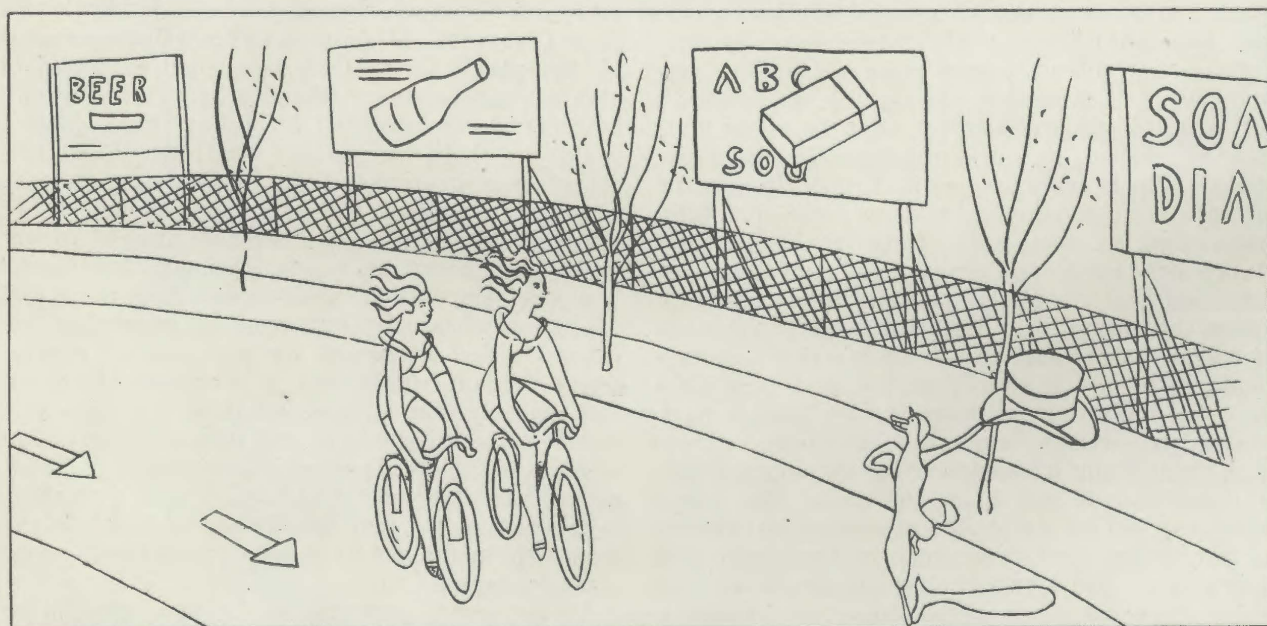
TWO FEATURE PROGRAMME

It was felt that it would be interesting to readers of SIGHT AND SOUND to have before them some statements of fact and opinion on the popularity and effects of the Two Feature Programme which is increasingly establishing itself in the cinemas of Great Britain. The Editorial Committee were particularly anxious to obtain opinions on the relative popularity and entertainment value of the Two Feature Programme and the Single Feature Programme supported by "shorts" and on the effect of the Two Feature Programme on the production and quality of "shorts," especially of documentary and general-interest films, and of newsreels. The Editorial Committee are grateful to those who have contributed to this symposium of opinions, and invite further contributions from readers of SIGHT AND SOUND.

MR. SIMON ROWSON

EXHIBITORS in competition with one another both in this country and in America have tried to attract audiences by offering longer and longer programmes. Some years ago in certain areas this led to programmes containing three feature films. Experience shows that the public has responded most favourably to programmes containing two feature films and it may now be taken as a fact that the public prefers the two feature programme to any other. The exhibitor is therefore now constrained to give the public what it wants. But it must be assumed that a large programme of good subjects must give the public greater satisfaction than a large programme of less good subjects, from which it necessarily follows that the exhibitor in the choice of his subjects will be naturally forced to reject the blatantly bad and to improve the grade of his final selections. Whatever type of programme a cinema offers, the whole of the programme should be carefully chosen; an exhibitor should not be willing to accept anything to make up his programme without considering its quality and suitability. No audience wants merely quantity; each film in the programme should

be of a high quality and suited to the audience, and the films should constitute a well-balanced programme in which the effect and quality of none of them is adversely affected by the others. The difficulties of giving effect to this ideal are considerable. In choosing his films, for either type of programme, the exhibitor's choice is conditioned by the percentage of his receipts which he must spend on his first feature film; by the total length of his programme, which is not supposed to exceed $3\frac{1}{4}$ hours, and which must be repeated in its entirety a fixed number of times each day; by the censors' certificates; by the quota requirements for exhibitors; and, finally, by the bookings of other cinemas. To-day these difficulties are less formidable for the exhibitor who shows a two feature programme—unless he wishes to include some "shorts"; they are increasing for the exhibitor who presents a single feature programme because the spread of the two feature programme has seriously affected the production of high quality "shorts." Nevertheless the exhibitor has a duty to his patrons to give them as good and as suitable a programme as he can, and only by performing this duty can he ensure that the quality of the films of every type that he is offered is maintained and improved.



The illustrations on this and the opposite page are from the new cartoon film THE HUNT, which is being made at London Film Productions' Studios by Anthony Gross and Hector Hoppin, who made JOIE DE VIVRE

MR. SYDNEY L. BERNSTEIN

In the questionnaire issued in 1934 to the patrons of the cinemas with which I am associated we included certain questions which were designed to elicit the reaction of the public to the two feature programme. "Which do you prefer," we asked, "two 'big' pictures in a programme or only one 'big' picture and several short ones?" 84.5 per cent. of the votes were for two big pictures; 15.5 per cent. for one 'big' picture and shorts. The notable fact arising from this result was the constancy of the ratio in the age groups and its striking variation in the sex groups. For instance, the preference of women for two big pictures rather than a mixed programme is much more marked than that of men.

There seems no doubt that in all the industrial areas and larger communities the public prefer two feature programmes. In small towns and rural areas, however, the general preference is for a single feature programme.

But under present conditions there are certain difficulties attendant upon the building up of a single feature programme with shorts. To give the length of programme which meets present-day competition and demands, at least three shorts are required to support a single feature, and many of the shorts produced are of low entertainment quality. The programme, therefore, suffers seriously. Most fictional shorts come from Hollywood and are comedies, but many companies concentrate almost entirely on musicals. It is difficult to build up a balanced programme with a musical feature film when most entertainment shorts are musicals themselves. The all-round quality of fictional shorts is particularly low.

British shorts are almost invariably documentary or interest, and only a few British fictional or comedy shorts of importance have been made during the last few years. The supply of documentary films is substantially maintained by the fact that a number of small independent production companies concentrate entirely on these and interest films; the quality is good and shows constant improvement.

The new Gross and Hoppin cartoon, *THE HUNT* (see also opposite page), will be made in Technicolor. The tones will be mainly blue and grey in the first part, changing in the middle scenes to orange and brown, and finally to green, slate-blue and light brown. The action begins in the stables and ends on the Great West Road; as the action becomes more complicated, the background is simplified.

Illustrations reproduced by courtesy of Miss Marie Seton

It is obvious that the popularity of the two feature programme has affected the production of shorts, especially documentaries and general interest films. But I do not think that it has affected the length of the news-reel, mainly because newsreel producers find it difficult to obtain sufficient interesting subjects to maintain the existing standard length.

MR. A. W. JARRATT

Gaumont-British Picture Corporation, Ltd.

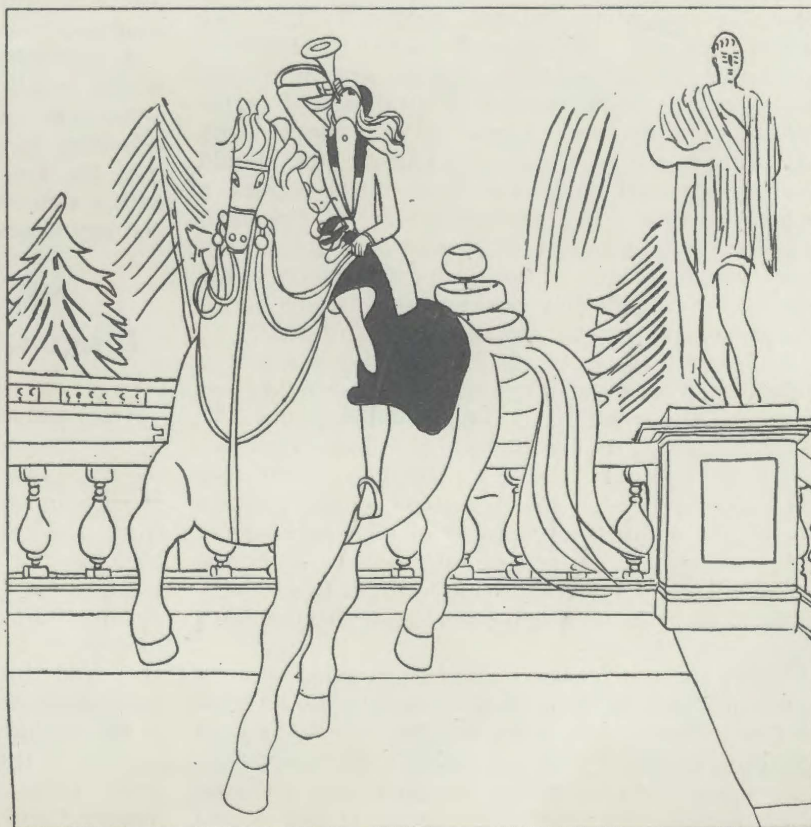
We find that, no matter what the length of the first feature is, or whatever its merit, the public as a whole demand a second feature.

It is unfortunate from an entertainment point of view that this is the public taste, because if one feature was shown we could give the public a much more varied entertainment.

It is quite well known that during the year there are very few super pictures produced, and not too many good ones. Therefore the average second feature that has to be shown is not as a rule good entertainment, and often in my opinion spoils the whole programme.

We have tried on occasions giving the public one feature and shorts, but whenever this happened we had so many complaints that now we deem it advisable always to show a second feature.

The showing of second features means that we are only able to show the first and second feature and the news-reel, and occasionally we can show a cartoon. As this is invariably the programme shown throughout the country, good, interesting short films are not produced as they are unremunerative.



MR. J. H. HUTCHISON,

Manager of the Ambassador, Hendon

I believe that reversion to the single feature programme would be advantageous to the cinema industry, but only if universal action were taken.

A large but unassessable percentage of revenue is derived from inveterate film-goers. They have an insatiable appetite for feature films and will, undoubtedly, desert the exhibitor who offers a single feature so long as a double feature programme is available in the vicinity. If, however, the single-feature programme becomes standard throughout the country, it is obvious that the industry will not only retain these patrons, but may derive further revenue from their additional visits.

Assuming that we retain our present patronage, the elimination of the second feature would enable the exhibitor to extend considerably the appeal of his programme by the inclusion of specialised shorts. Each may have only a limited appeal, but it is rational to suggest that documentary, sport, scenic, historical, and similar interest films may attract additional patrons. Programmes consisting of a variety of subjects, each with individual appeal, cannot but have a cumulative effect on business.

The news film is an increasingly important factor, but the customary double feature programme restricts the time available to approximately ten minutes. With more time at their disposal, there is no limit to what the news-reel companies may be able to accomplish. We might assemble a "news" for individual theatres. Each section would be bookable separately and not necessarily from the same company. We would have a children's section, a woman's section, a sports section, foreign news, gossip, scenes from the studios and forthcoming productions. There is no reason why some time in the near future, the current news should not be delivered daily, and local items become a regular feature. The cartoon is one of the most popular features in the daily papers. Our screen news would include a short topical cartoon. One can go on indefinitely making suggestions for a comprehensive screen newspaper. Why not?

As fewer features would be required, without a reduction in revenue, individual pictures would gross more and the standard of films would improve.

Remembering that with a 3¼ hours show, every seat sold after 4.45 p.m. is gone for the day so that only one capacity house is possible each evening, perhaps one of the greatest advantages of all would be the ability to reduce the programme time to 2½ hours. The exhibitor would then be able to fill twice every night, thereby increasing tremendously the monetary value of his house.

Surely the case for the single feature programme is sufficiently logical to merit the careful consideration of the industry, but I repeat that the individual exhibitor cannot afford to gamble with his existing patronage. Any attempt to alter the existing state without the unanimous approval and united

co-operation of every exhibitor in the country is doomed to failure.

MR. G. F. SANGER,

Managing Editor of British Movietone News

It has long been my conviction that the industry has not properly exploited the function which news-reel organisations possess of putting material on the screen within a few hours of its shooting, and one of the strange aspects of film entertainment is that the type of production which can get most quickly on to the screen is one that occupies so little of its playing time. The public, I am sure, would like to see a longer news-reel, or something which bears the same impress of being red-hot and up to the minute.

Thus I naturally cherish the hope that exhibitors will come in due time to endorse this opinion by devoting more time to their news-reel, more showmanship to its presentation and, incidentally, a greater share of the proceeds of entertainment to the news-reel organisations by which means alone can they offer longer newsreels.

Some pointer to the trend is afforded by the popularity of News Theatres, which British Movietone News pioneered, and which have multiplied exceedingly since the transformation of the Shaftesbury Avenue Pavilion into a house showing only news-reel subjects five years ago. Shorts have been introduced into News Theatre programmes without affecting the news-reel character of these houses, and it is quite clear that programmes made up of shorts, cartoons and news-reels have a wide public.

I, therefore, view with misgiving any movement which would squeeze out the shorts, including news-reels. It is only my personal opinion, but believing in variety of entertainment I consider that the two feature programme cannot compare with a well-balanced programme of shorts, cartoons and news-reels allied to a good feature film.

MR. H. BRUCE WOOLFE,

Director, Gaumont-British Instructional Films

The early popularity of the cinema was built up on the variety of films shown, but during recent years, as is well known, the two feature programme has gradually ousted the short subject from the screens of the country; principally because the masses prefer seeing two feature pictures to a mixed programme of one feature and various shorts. The result has been, that production of short films has fallen off very considerably, and renters now find great difficulty in securing suitable short films. It must be remembered that in the old days when short films were popular, the quality of the films shown was very different from what it is to-day. What would have passed muster then, is now impossible.

The thinking public undoubtedly prefer the one feature programme, but unfortunately, they are not in sufficient numbers to counteract the vast mass which thinks otherwise. The result is, that now we have reached the stage where our old friend the "vicious circle" again appears. Producers will not make short films because there is insufficient demand for them, and exhibitors cannot book them because they do not exist.

The two feature programme has little effect on news-reels, as this is the one type of short that retains its place in the programmes, and is found to be the most useful type of subject to put in between two features and thus make up the programme.

In my opinion, the only policy to pursue is to continue to make first class short films which if, they are good enough, will force their way into programmes in spite of opposition, *e.g.*, Walt Disney cartoons, and *Secrets of Life*.

From Mr. JOHN GRIERSON

To

THE EDITOR, SIGHT AND SOUND.

DEAR SIR,

I can see no great value in an academic discussion of the two feature programme at the present moment. The show people have their own good business reasons for developing it and our arguments will make no difference to the issue. The Mohawks of the combines are on the hunt. They are after the scalps of the independent exhibitors and, if in the process, they exploit the money which is coming into independent production, so much the better. They will argue it is what the public wants (*i.e.*, thinks it wants—which is something very different), but that is not their real reason.

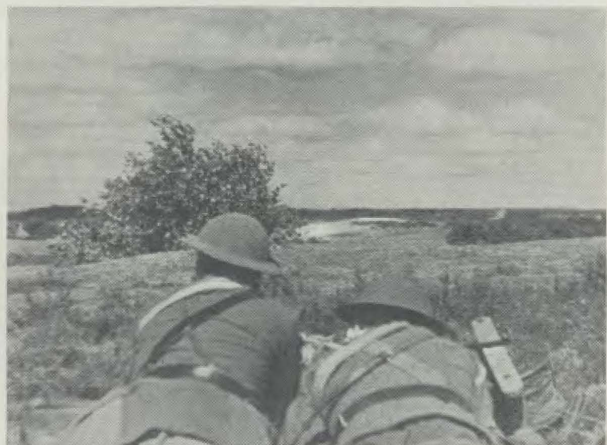
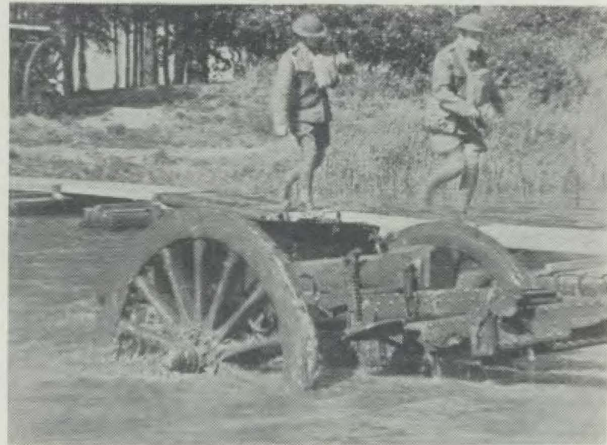
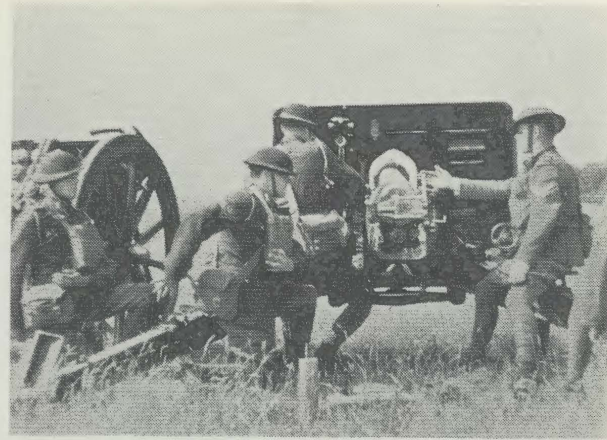
The people of public purpose who read SIGHT AND SOUND should not shed unnecessary tears. This is a god-send. It will throw the better shorts into the non-theatrical market and add strength to it; and that will be the answer of the shorts to the Mohawks. Like their savage originals they will probably suffer for this lack of foresight. Who knows, we may yet see them in reserves doing tricks for charabanc parties.

The argument is really a very simple one. Men cannot live by bread alone, even the show-man. In his shorts he could give leaven to the programme—that little something more which makes all the difference in depth. The longer pictures cannot attempt it except at great risk of money. The short pictures can, especially the documentaries. In the present situation it may not seem a quality worth saying, yet it may on the long view mean all the difference between social loyalty to the theatres and social disregard of them.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN GRIERSON.

On the right are scenes from the War Office film on ARTILLERY CO-OPERATION, produced by G.B.-Instructional, Ltd.

Reproduced by permission of the Controller, H.M. Stationery Office





Making lobster pots in *THE TURN OF THE TIDE*. A British National picture

(G.B.D.)

By Alistair Cooke

FILMS OF THE QUARTER

I THINK it was Rudolf Arnheim who said recently that the average critic naively wastes his time discussing the style of George Cukor, or the psychological oddities of Joan Crawford, when he knows all the time that these people are cogs in an industry, as like as any other two cogs. This is true enough and needed saying, though I have the anxious feeling that if the names had been Frank Capra and Claudette Colbert, he would have thought he was making the same point. To write about George Cukor and imagine you are boring from within is one thing; to discuss his style as a prevailing fashion, or a luxury reflex is another. And there is a sense in which the most particular analysis of ten peas could be telling criticism. Mr. Arnheim's rebuff is in this sense a paleotechnic snort, the protest of a man who backs the romance of mews against pre-fabricated houses. He imagines he is defending individuality against soulless mechanisation. Whereas some of us would say he was defending a crude machine against a perfected one, a fumbling stage of functionalism against an achieved stage. There would be no

sense in a motor show if there was nobody to know the difference between two engines, between two cogs. Of course, this is germane to the principle of Arnheim's criticism, but unfair to its application. The machine Mr. Cukor and Miss Crawford are cogs in is a smooth, ostentatious, trivial product. It may not be worth analysing for its components, but it is worth looking at as a mechanism.

All this is an attempt to clarify my wanting, this quarter, not to recommend particular films but to recommend a "line" in films. The best things about American films have rarely been the invention of a person, but the common denominator of certain qualities—irony, kindness, speed, aliveness. At their lowest common denominator, these mean *The Gold Diggers* and *Woman Tamer*. At their best, they mean *Strictly Confidential* and *She Married Her Boss*. The English qualities of shyness, a sense of fun, dependability, conservatism produce at their worst—*First a Girl*, at their best *The Turn of the Tide*.

To make any list of the "pick of the month" means choosing for an even level of excellence,

Robert Donat and Jean Parker in René Clair's
THE GHOST GOES
WEST

(United Artists)

though more scrappy films may have higher spots. And so while recommending, and being obliged to report more fully on, *La Bandera*, *The Informer*, *Top Hat*, *Turn of the Tide*, *Alice Adams*, *The Memory Expert*, *She Married Her Boss*, there are stretches of pleasure in *Escapade*, *Anna Karenina*, *Hands Across the Table*, *The Clairvoyant*, *Broadway Melody*

of 1936, and *Arms and the Girl*. If that flip, easy gaiety, in *She Married Her Boss*, is the most pleasurable thing you get from American films you should also take in *Arms and the Girl* and *Hands Across the Table*. If it nowhere touches your senses, you would do well to skip all three. Here, however, for better or worse is a report on most of them.

The first half of *La Bandera* is worth, for this



critic, the whole of *Episode*, *Joan of Arc* and most of the continental films that have come his way this quarter. For *The New Babylon*, the resurrected Trauberg piece, I wouldn't swap one of my home movies. Julien Duvivier, of *Poil de Carotte* and *Golgotha*, who directed *La Bandera* seems now to be high and dry as the surviving master of French cinema. At least, anybody who quarrels over

"master" is granted the quibble. He is, anyway, a master of several things: of making melodrama realistic and quietly decent; technically, of employing a mobile camera to indicate the tempo of his characters' psychological states; and he is, with the late F. W. Murnau and the pre-Man of Aran Flaherty, a master of what might be called the "anti-graphic" school of outdoor photography. He is neither luscious nor matter-of-fact with natural scenery. He shoots just into the sun, with a shaded lens, and lets the human beings look after themselves. And there is, even to the half of the film stultified by a masterpiece of mis-casting (of Annabella), a civilised understatement in handling the relations of small groups of men.



"Sam, Sam, pick oop tha moosket."
A scene from the first Anson Dyer sound
cartoon in colour, SAM AND HIS MUSKET
(Reunion Films)



Paula Wessely was awarded the Volpi Cup at Venice International Exhibition for the world's best screen performance of 1935 in *EPISODE*. She is seen here in the part of a young Viennese art student which she played in the film (See also p. 175) (Reunion)

The *Informer* is most of the time as near to an author's original script as Hollywood could ever be. Nine times out of ten this would mean the trembling, reverent declamation of full-page speeches from novels written around 1850. But this is not *David Copperfield*, and *The Informer* was not written to be read aloud to the family. Its better dialogue goes miraculously straight on to the screen and John Ford had the sense to have Liam O'Flaherty in on the adaptation. Ford, whose other film this year—*Passport to Fame*, has been admirably remarked on in these columns, is the surprise director of the year. There is a confident speed in his direction of realistic quarrels and character dialogue that shows, Herr Arnheim willing or not, a personal style. *The Informer* is good enough not to be overpraised. The Irish locale succumbed towards the end to the memory of Donn Byrne. And the psychology of Margot

Grahame's street girl was muddled and not at all understood—she practically walked into the film straight from a penny gaff. But there is a goodish, slow opening, a dramatic placing of rebel faces in close dialogue, two magnificently directed scenes—one in the commandant's house, another in the near-bawdy house at the end; and no amount of sensitive editing could create or trim the wholly surprising and tremendous performance of Victor MacLaglen, befuddled, trying to catch on, blinking like the Hairy Ape through a mist of boyish idealism and accusing faces.

A mist of girlish and universal snobbery is the particular charm around George Stephens' *Alice Adams*. Here is the straight peep-show view of the movies done with enormous patience, trusting, as all peep-show movies must, on the accuracy of its psychology to help it get by. Well, *Alice Adams* did more than that. Booth Tarkington's famous family are a family and a period in one, and



Charles Laughton as Captain Bligh in *MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY*, directed by Frank Lloyd. Clark Gable and Francot Tone also play leading parts (M.G.M.)



Annabella as she appears in *LA BANDERA*. See Alistair Cooke's comment and the review by A. Vesselo on page 176

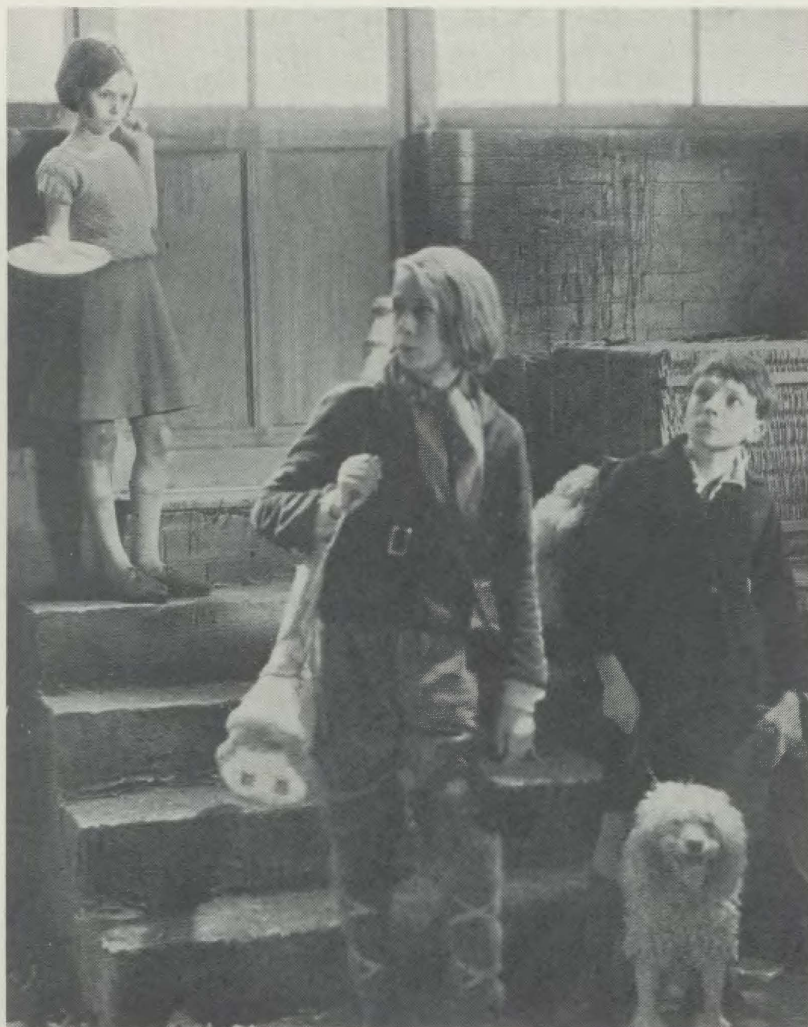
Stephens deserves much credit for taking pains to keep their era plain and pathetic. A similar credit is due to Norman Walker, who after many years working on other people's films, now comes along with a tidy, proud, and charming piece, as pleasant a British film as any this year, *Turn of the Tide*. Walker, like Stephens, is content to see in humble people neither cosmic symbols nor an easy means to contrasting "earthiness" with urban night-life (leave the room at once, *New Babylon*), but interesting human beings, as acquisitive and attractive as the rest of us. The impact of the Grierson school gives his outdoor scenes an importance they might have lacked if the film had been made in any country but ours.

Another British film, *The Clairvoyant*, must be, unless my memory is egging me on to a discourtesy, Mr. Maurice Elvey's personal contribution to the movies in a life time of making them. As a British

film it is, with every scene, a shock and a delight. And however you explain the crispness of the acting, the certainty of the action, there's no doubt that it's all due to Maurice Elvey. He handles British interiors with a sense of character rare in a non-satirical nation.

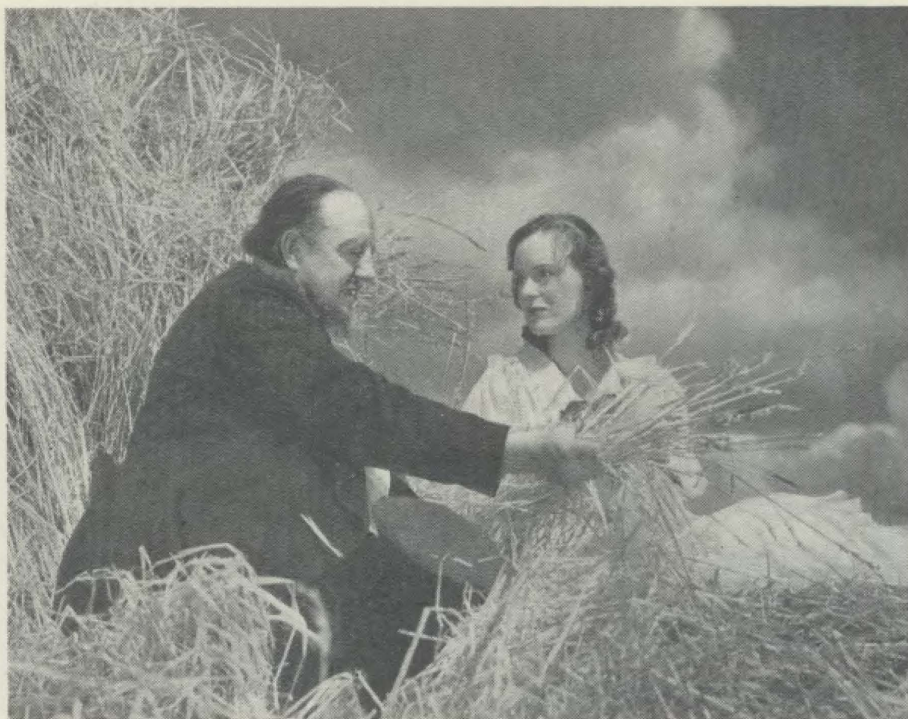
Through the thick and shiny treacle of M-G-M's direction (note I do not waste time discussing Sidney Franklin's style) the Garbo manages to emerge, in *Anna Karenina*, as a maturer, more humorous and tragic person than she has seemed before.

The latest Fields, *The Memory Expert*, hands another bouquet to Clyde Bruckman, though probably a larger one to Fields himself (for he rewrites his dialogue, or rather obstinately paraphrases it in performance) for contributing a period piece that should be in any nation's Film Library. Filed away neatly with *Fortune's* piece on Mr. Gerald Corkum, paint sprayman in the Plymouth Motor plant, *The Memory Expert* would represent a comi-tragic, authentic record of those fifty million average Americans who own their own home on \$1,200 a year which they are not sure of making. *She Married Her Boss*, on the other hand, takes a nice ironic turn with a part of the American



Robert Lynen of *POIL DE CAROTTE* fame in a new film shown at the Academy Cinema, *SANS FAMILLE*

Reproduced by courtesy of the Academy Cinema



Harry Baur and Penelope Dudley Ward in *MOSCOW NIGHTS*. It was directed by Anthony Asquith and was the first release of the new distributing company, General Film Distributors

Dream—those painful seconds when the patient is trying to decide whether a wealthy, adoring husband is better than a career, or whether just a husband isn't better than either. Three names make this a firm, delightful satirical comedy, Gregory La Cava, who directed it, Claudette Colbert, who is perfecting her sarcastic banter, and Melvyn Douglas, brilliantly aware of his own dumbness as the husband.

The same vein of irreverence in adventure is worked with a disarming casualness in a carbon, but unblurred, copy of *It Happened One Night* called here *Arms and the Girl*. Labour parades in New York, Communist protest flattered this film with the unlikely gift of keen propaganda; but its explicit politics, if any, don't need, and don't pretend to be convincing. Its comedy and Capra-copied direction (by Sidney Lanfield) are enough to be grateful for.

Michael Curtis was much more likely to flutter the Board of Film Censors with a radical piece that Hollywood had to ease itself by softening, a demented incident in a Pennsylvania coalfield, called *Black Fury*. Muni, the critics' favourite, can do, and I must faithfully record again, did no wrong. Michael Curtis did wrong to make the speech so authentically immigrant, but that was for truth's sake, not ours.

Perhaps, in a pleasant quarter, the pleasantest offerings were Mitchell Leisen's *Hands Across the Table*, with Carole Lombard exquisitely doing the Colbert-Stanwyck-Loy line of kidding and, *The Ghost Goes West*, not a Clair film, thankfully though, not a Korda film, but getting away from the Korda tape and ending in the Clair home stretch, starting unpromisingly in ye olde Scotland and ending in a witty, improbable Florida of Clair's innocent devising.

The two best shorts of this—and most of any

other—season have been the Elton-Anstey *Housing Problems* and Benchley's *How to Sleep*. They have not, it should be said, the slightest connection. *Housing Problems* is reviewed elsewhere, but here I should like to insist that this most moving record of how the other, embarrassing half lives will lose the reward of its social force (and that, after all, is the purpose of documentary) if it is not shown up and down the country in the same programme as *Shearer and Crawford*. In a world of celluloid, the cinema can offer no saner justification than celluloid intrusions from the world of slummy, unsocial fact. The Benchley is another, and the best and most cinematic of his inimitable analyses of the housing problems of *our* half of the world, that is—the fed, housed, refrigerated world that generations of curious inventors and doctors lived and died for.

NEW DOCUMENTARY GROUP

As we go to press we have received information of the establishment of Associated Realist Film Producers Ltd., directors: Edgar Anstey, Arthur Elton, Paul Rotha, Donald Taylor.

We quote the following passages from their official announcement:

"Associated Realist Film Producers has been founded as an authoritative body qualified to act as a consultant film organisation to Government Departments and other official bodies, to the various Public Services, University and Education authorities, Industrial and Commercial organisations, and others anxious to make their activities known to a wide public. Such bodies are often at a loss to know how to set about the making of a film which will be worthy of their purpose, which will not involve them in unforeseen costs and which will reach the audience they require. A.R.F.P. has been formed to meet this need.

"A.R.F.P. offers the following services:

(i) Advice to bodies desiring to have films made; (ii) Preparation of scenarios; (iii) Drawing up of complete production programmes; (iv) Provision of Film Officers to handle complete production programmes; (v) Arrangement for all types of distribution; (vi) The taking of responsibility for the production of films by qualified units."

Associate Film Directors are Andrew Buchanan, William Coldstream, Marion Grierson, J. B. Holmes, Stuart Legg, Alex. Shaw, Evelyn Spice, R. H. Watt, Basil Wright. Consultants are A. Cavalcanti, John Grierson, Professor J. B. S. Haldane, F.R.S., Professor Lancelot Hogben, Julian S. Huxley, E. McKnight Kauffer, Walter Leigh, Basil Ward, A.R.I.B.A.

All communications to be addressed to The Secretary, A.R.F.P. Ltd., 33, Soho Square, London, W.1.

CONTINENTAL FILMS

Reviewed by

A. Vesselo

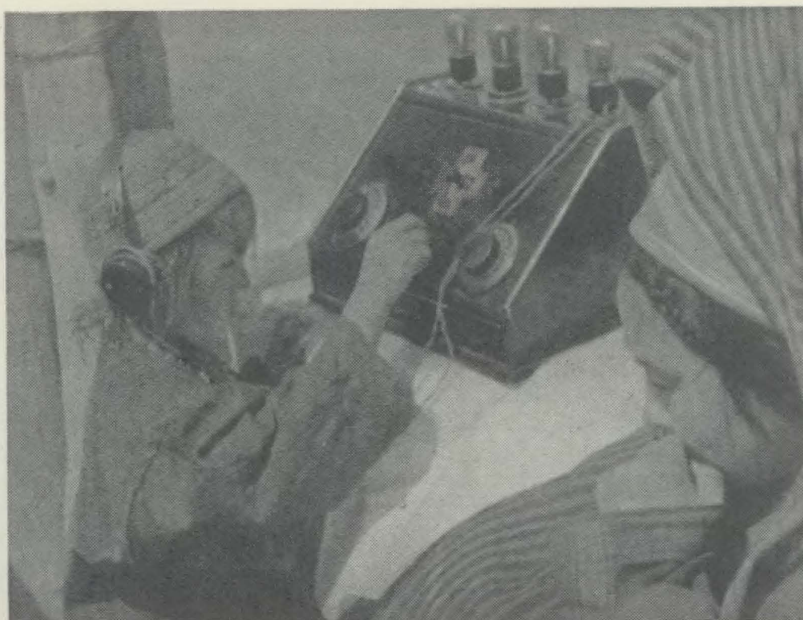
SOMEONE imperfectly equipped with geographical learning, who had overheard devotees of the Continental film dilating upon its merits, might without difficulty persuade himself that the Continent was a continuous territory, unbroken by political or physical subdivisions, and that its capital and centre was that Cloud-Cuckoo-Town of synthetic gaiety, Vienna.

The Vienna-motif has appeared in two recent films: one of which, *Letzte Liebe*, has the distinction of being one of the duller and silliest films of the year. In the race for the Continental booby-prize it is run close by the German *Musik im Blut*, whose main achievement is to leave us wondering how the Haydn 'cello-concerto could be made to sound so remarkably sentimental.

The other Viennese film is *Episode*, but the fact that the period in this case assigned for the action is 1922 need not delude us. Vienna, depressions and inflations notwithstanding, remains Vienna—a city of romantic and engaging shadows; and the meaning of *Episode* is to be found, not in any superficial variation of date, but in the opportunities for virtuosity with which it provides its leading lady, Paula Wessely.

The hypnotic influence of the Continental film is made manifest in strange places. The marking-up of *Maskerade* in popular estimation goes hand-in-hand with the marking-down of *Escapade*—though there is actually only the least important of differences between them. And some cognate preconception must be held in part responsible for the audience's exaggerated reactions at the preview of René Clair's *The Ghost Goes West*: where a tempest of laughter greeted even the slightest suspicion of a joke.

Undoubtedly the most interesting of the last quarter's contributions have come from the Film Society, which opened its season at the end of October with the Soviet film *Three Songs of Lenin*, completed by Dziga Vertov in the summer of the year before. This work triumphantly violates most of the more considerable canons of film-construction. The diversity of subject-matter, presented in a form which depends for its unity upon the complicated interposition and accumulation of loosely-related shots and ideas, given a combined



From *THREE SONGS OF LENIN*, reviewed below

(Film Society)

Reproduced by courtesy of Miss Marie Seton

value by general reference to the same powerful underlying theme, produces a continuity whose chief characteristic appears on first sight to be one of labyrinthine disorder: nor is this made less by the basic isolation of each of the film's three parts, by the incorporation of photographic material of all ages and origins, some of it of a definitely inferior quality, and by the use of such a contrivance as the cut-in still. Yet the emotional force which inspires the whole has a greater cohesive efficacy than could be furnished by any additional niceties of technique; and one recognizes the resultant external over-weightedness as something arising rather out of too much thought than out of too little.

L'Atalante, Jean Vigo's last film, made in 1933, has its settings in the same underworld of the imagination, and takes its course with the same deliberately-calculated inconsequence, as a Disney cartoon—and why indeed should Disney have a monopoly of fantasy in the cinema? From the first shots of the wedding-procession, winding its singular way towards the barge, to the arrival of the barge at the sea and the reconciliation of the husband and wife, the film is crowded with all the twilit and giggling phenomena of surrealism: Vigo almost convinces us that the word cannot be Anglicised.

The high- and low-angle shots, often framing approaching or receding figures; the sky-shots, here peculiarly endowed with significance; the bottled hands, the cascading cats, the puppets and mechanical toys, and the musical boxes, with the odd noises which they emit; the reflections caught in darkened windows; the dance-hall, and the pedlar with his lunatic eccentricities, his bicycle, his conjuring-tricks, and his one-man band; the theft of the hand-bag and the dragging-off of the thief, perceived in bizarre perspective from behind a

row of railings; the husband's desperate plunge into the water; the parallel shots, dissolving into one another, of the husband and wife in different beds; these items and innumerable others, elaborately contrived according to the same pattern, load up the atmosphere in an extraordinary manner and display the capacities of the cinema in a new and marvellous light.

Of the three full-length films so far presented by the Film Society, the only one which is likely to be shown publicly in the West End is the French version of Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*—a supreme exercise in discretion for the sub-title writer, since the majority of the film leans heavily on its dialogue. This it does advisedly, for by words alone, and volumes of them, can Dostoevsky's intention be fully conveyed: an observation involving an obvious criticism of the Procrustean methods employed by those who endeavour to fit his novels to the screen.

The honours go to the chief actors, Harry Baur as the Inspector and Pierre Blanchard as Raskolnikov. Most of the subsidiary characters are there, but are crammed into corners; and the film as a film is an uncertain quantity. It has the lengthy and painstaking thoroughness (despite abbreviation) of Bernard's excellent *Les Misérables*; but on the whole is less impressive.

The nearest thing elsewhere to the grinning phantoms that peep and leer, if one has eyes for

them, from behind every corner of *L'Atalante*, is contained in UFA's *Das Mädchen Johanna*; but whereas the surrealism of the first is intellectual and intentional, in the second it becomes a groping monstrosity, blind and distorted through excess of emotional pressure. Technical ability might have been made to serve less twisted ends. The background to the action is not so much a period of history as a region of the mind; and the characters not men, but spirits of darkness, grotesque and earthbound.

The brutal-heroic also finds a home in *La Bandera*, though on a somewhat different plane. This is a French film of the Spanish Foreign Legion, and its strong point is the fidelity with which it draws the atmosphere, both of the Legion itself and the lower quarters of Barcelona. Yet this very virtue proves an obstacle to completeness, for the concentration on atmosphere seems largely to swamp the plot. The amply effective preliminary episode in Paris sets a problem whose explanation, long-awaited, is of the slenderest; while the inserted love-interest (for what it is worth) is treated in the most perfunctory manner. Such top-heaviness of narrative suggests difficulties in adaptation: the original detail of the novel appears to have been found too much for the film's brief passage. As for the bursts of heroics, they add to the film's vigorous masculinity, and therefore no doubt to its general appeal; but many will find them distasteful.

Directors and distributors of the films reviewed above are as follows:—

	Director.	Distributor.
Musik im Blut ...	Erich Waschneck ...	G.B. Distributors, Ltd., Film House, Wardour Street, W.1.
Episode ...	Walter Reisch ...	Reunion, Regency House, 1-4, Warwick Street, W.1.
Three Songs of Lenin ...	Dziga Vertov, assisted by E. Svilova	Film Society, 56, Manchester Street, W.1.
L'Atalante ...	Jean Vigo ...	Ditto
Crime and Punishment	Pierre Chenal ...	Ditto
Das Mädchen Johanna...	Dr. Gustav Ucicky ...	J. G. & R. B. Wainwright, Ltd., 62, Shaftesbury Ave., W.1.
La Bandera ...	J. Duvivier... ..	Transatfilm, Paris.

FILMS OF THE GAS INDUSTRY

Housing Problems (A. Elton and E. H. Anstey).

Romance of a Lump of Coal.

Men Behind the Meters (A. Elton).

Dinner Hour (E. H. Anstey).

How Gas is Made (A. Elton).

Distributors: British Commercial Gas Association, 28, Grosvenor Gardens, London, S.W.1.; and the Western Electric Co. through their All-in Hiring Road Show Service

Of the five films here bracketed together, only one deserves serious notice. Taken as a group, they display a lack of method, and their continuity in places is primitive. Far too great a burden of explanation has been thrust upon the commentary, which has at times very little positive relation to the pictures on the screen. Occasionally there are flashes of imagination, and signs of a living approach to the subject. It is interesting to compare them with even so moderate a work as *Port of Five Seas* (reviewed elsewhere); which, without laying claim to any particularly high intrinsic value, shows, nevertheless, a far surer grasp of the fundamental principles of exposition and continuity.

The film which calls for special remark is *Housing Problems*,—not because of any profundities of technique, but because barely and without fuss, it introduces to the public screen a topic of which nobody should be ignorant and to which

only the camera and the microphone can do justice. At little expense, ambitious to do no more than set the truth before us, the directors have brought us into straightforward contact with slum-dwellers in their ordinary surroundings, and have permitted them to be their own mouthpieces. The result is the more striking for being unobscured by the blurring fingers of sentimentality and spurious romanticism. Although the people whom we meet are fully conscious of the miserable condition in which they are compelled to live, they are unimpressed by its dramatic aspect. Now and then their utterances may cause laughter; but such laughter has the echo of horror in thin disguise. And, beside some of these appalling barbaric hovels, the vision of flats on the new L.C.C. housing estates is like an entry into the New Jerusalem.

A. V.

FORUM'S RUSSIAN SEASON

A season of Soviet films opened at the Forum, Villiers Street, on October 24th, with the presentation of Pudovkin's *Storm over Asia*. After a run of four weeks, this was followed by *New Babylon*. Among other films which will be shown are *Bed and Sofa*, *Battleship Potemkin*, *The Deserter*, *October* and *The Ghost that Never Returns*.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS

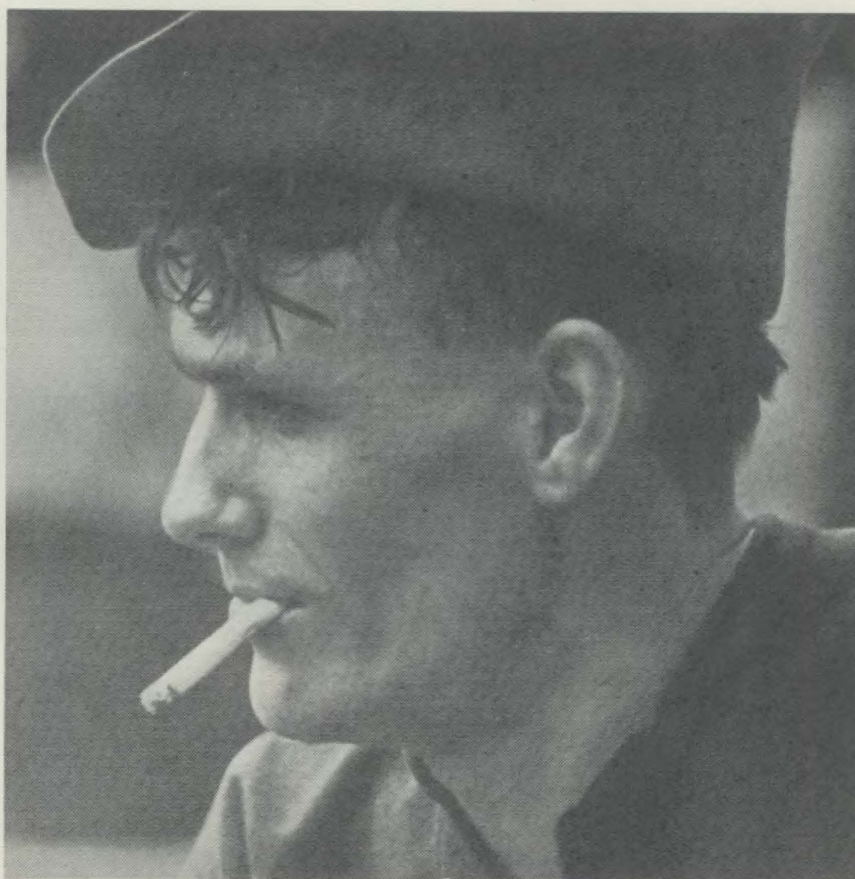
Reviewed
by
A. Vesselo

COAL FACE (British)
Production : G.P.O. Film Unit
Direction : John Grierson
Length : 1,016 feet
Distributors : A.B.F.D.

The imminent expansion of the film into new mechanical spheres should not deceive us into thinking that the problems created by the advent of sound have yet been more than half-solved. Active research into these problems is still desirable; and in as far as the endeavours of the G.P.O. Film Unit meet this end, we may accept them with gratitude. Their evident preoccupation, however, with certain of the more *recherché* aspects of sound-technique is not so easily commendable. It may be that they have chosen the right direction; but it is at least as possible that the road on which they now find themselves leads back in a circle to the beginning.

If *Coal Face* could be considered a finished work, one would feel bound to stigmatize it as incoherent in conception and ineffectual in execution. Since it is avowedly experimental, and no more, so sweeping an attitude is perhaps unjustifiable; yet it remains difficult to appreciate the worth of the methods adopted.

The old assertion, once so dogmatically put forward, that the cinema is primarily a visual medium, could not have been more violently repudiated. In *Coal Face* it is the sound-track which bears all the emphasis, and the picture that is the accompaniment. So much so, that the film would almost certainly be far easier to follow without any pictures at all. If the implications of this system should appear a trifle dubious, the composition of the sound-track in itself seems more dubious still.



From *COAL FACE*, directed by Grierson

Reproduced by courtesy of H.M. Stationery Office and the G.P.O. Film Unit

The linking-up of spoken commentary with natural sound, music, choir and recitative, produces an *omnium gatherum* that is not something more than each, but a mutual confounding of all. The urge "to incorporate commentary . . . in the body of the film" seems in any case mistaken. If a commentary is necessary, then it must—surely?—be in order to make explanatory comments on something outside it: if it is not necessary for that purpose, then let us abandon it altogether, and with relief. To attempt to turn it into a semi-abstract effect, side by side with other abstract or semi-abstract effects, when its very essence is the concrete meaning which it conveys, is an undertaking incredibly hard to understand.

In view of the declared position of *Coal Face* as merely a stage in experiment, there is little point in criticising it here more specifically—though a great deal more might be said, if there were space, about what lies behind it. Its brightest individual passage is that in which choir and picture combine impressionistically to suggest machinery rapidly working up speed.

For the rest, let the issue prove the case—whether it be for or against.



Rotha's **GREAT CARGOES**, reviewed below (G.B.D.)

CITIZENS OF THE FUTURE (British)

Production : G.-B. Instructional

Direction : Donald Taylor

Photography : George Noble

Length : 1,913 feet

Distributors : G.-B. D.

GREAT CARGOES (British)

Production : G.-B. Instructional

Direction : Paul Rotha

Photography : George Pocknall and Frank Bundy

Length : 2,000 feet

Distributors : G.-B.D.

These two films conclude the "Face of Britain" series, produced under the sponsorship of G.-B. Instructional.

Donald Taylor's survey of modern procedure in the realm of public education deserves the epithet "documentary" much more decidedly than most films to which the term is applied. Opening with the Infants' Schools, he carries us briefly but systematically through the various stages of development, both elementary and more advanced, and indicates successfully the important changes which have taken place during the last two or three decades—and which are still very much in process of evolution. The stress is laid throughout on the manipulative and practical aspects of training, and on the encouragement of interest and initiative. Recreation, outdoor exercise, and the provision of general health services, are not ignored. If the contrast between present and past is not directly pointed, it is implicit, and an older generation will no doubt be able to point the contrast directly for itself.

There is no attempt at an illusory completeness

is used sparingly, and its purpose is thus the more satisfactorily fulfilled.

The one important lapse from grace occurs at the conclusion, where we are presented with shots of children, lightly clad, parading in rigid formation past the camera. They are photographed from a number of different angles, but mostly against the sky, with a consequent accentuation of the romantic and emotional element. These shots recall to us too vividly the embryo soldiers of a foreign and warlike dictatorship. The implied allusion is none the less unfortunate for being, presumably, unintentional.

Great Cargoes, reconstructed from one of Paul Rotha's earlier films, *Rising Tide*, discloses a strange conflict of ends. Much of it, from the purely visual point of view, is as stimulatingly composed and edited as one could wish. Using the paraphernalia of large-scale commerce as his material, and by the frequent introduction of dissolves and the skilful contraposition of lines of movement, Rotha has built up moving patterns and rhythms which are often excellent to watch; but beneath this compact and elaborate surface there seems to be little but confusion. The action does not properly explain itself, and the commentary's laboured annotations are an obstacle rather than an aid to comprehension. The snatches of disembodied dialogue (without which no up-to-date documentary film is apparently complete) serve little real purpose, and in this respect are at one with the close-up heads of natives at the beginning, posed carefully against the sky. The music is plainly of greater value, for it can be—and is—employed to emphasize certain of the rhythms; while the best of the sound-effects

(an impossible task); and intimacy of pictorial atmosphere has been made the chief aim. Remarkably little suggestion appears of any artificial arrangement of material: the children, indeed, seem for the most part oblivious of the camera's proximity, and several extremely interesting studies have been obtained, in close-up, of girls and boys engaged in their normal pursuits. Commentary naturally has to find a place, but

are the natural sounds in straightforward synchronization with their objects. But the nominal subject-matter of the film, the increasing cargo-traffic between this country and the Dominions, is obscurely and patchily handled: formal design has been allowed to sweep meaning out of sight.

BESIDE THE SEASIDE (British)

Production: A Strand Film

Direction: Marion Grierson

Music: 43rd Light Infantry Band

Length: Approx. 2,300 feet

Distributors: Strand Film Company

If any newcomer to the documentary field should require a handy compendium of information relating to his craft, he will find all that he needs in *Beside the Seaside*. Miss Grierson has incorporated in this film practically every apposite screen-device, from synchronized sound and animated diagrams to slow-motion and the wipe-dissolve: what is more, she has applied to them a lightness and assurance of touch which may well be envied. The result is not perhaps perfect, but it shows a greater command of ideas—ideas worthy of the name—than half-a-dozen other films of normal accomplishment.

Beside the Seaside recommends to our attention the holiday resorts about the South Coast, and after an introductory sequence reminding us of their continued existence during the colder and wetter months, illustrates the relief which they bring to the city-worker, overtaken by the heat of the year. We are conveyed, with the escaping multitude, to a composite seaside town; and the remainder of the film is concerned with the progress of a composite day at the same spot.

The impressionism of this method is not without its dangers, but restraint, an eye for characteristic and revealing detail, and a sense of humour, have here kept them admirably in the background. The component shots are often adroitly cut and timed, and the camera-positions are varied and well-chosen (even the stationary recording of a beach concert-party has purpose behind it). In its

surroundings the Military Band accompaniment is unusually apt. One recollects such items as the receding sub-title LONDON, with white lines spreading outwards from it to points on a map, to suggest the exodus to the sea; and the siesta-sequence in slow-motion, unfortunately too protracted but amusingly conceived.

There is observable an incomplete control of sound-transitions (the sound-reproduction is incidentally poor), and an inconsistency of photographic quality, through excess of sunlight in places. But the film is full of life; and it is significant that even the inevitable superimposed voice appears not merely as an "effect," but as a distinct—if misplaced—continuity-device.

VANISHING SAILS (British)

Production: Steuart Films

Direction: Ronald Steuart

Photography: Ronald Steuart

Length: 1,525 feet

Distributors: Steuart Films 16mm. (Kinograph 35mm.)

ERISKAY (British)

Production: Dr. Werner Kissling

Direction: Dr. Werner Kissling

Photography: Dr. Werner Kissling

Length: 1,750 feet

Distributors: Zenifilms

Under the editorial supervision of John Gifford

The faint pink haze of romantic retrospect holds a special allure for the makers of short non-fiction films. Each of the above subjects enters wholeheartedly into this category, and the title of the first tells its own tale.

Vanishing Sails commemorates the gradually



BESIDE THE SEASIDE, a Strand Film reviewed above. It was directed by Marion Grierson

disappearing sailing-barge employed to carry freights along the course of the Thames and the Medway. Appropriately enough, the sails themselves are dwelt on at some length—and in an interesting fashion. The film also guides us past some of the more important landmarks on the routes followed, and shows us such an event as the annual barge-race at Gravesend. The conclusion, as one might possibly have foreseen, is on a note sometimes oddly referred to as “nostalgic:” shots are included of rotting and forsaken hulks.

The handling is pleasant and the movements of the camera smooth. There are, however, too many fades in the continuity, which in the second reel becomes less self-contained and develops a tendency to scrappiness. In general, the presence of a few simple maps or plans to establish the background would have been an advantage.

Eriskay sets its own tone by describing itself as “a poem of remote lives.” The account which it gives of life on an island in the Outer Hebrides is accompanied throughout by a choir singing Gaelic airs—a method with certain defects as well as virtues. The atmosphere on the whole verges rather too closely on sentimentality. Technically, the film is not of the first rank; but it has the merit of a direct and unpretentious manner, and succeeds effectively in impressing on us the importance of sheep-rearing to the island's inhabitants. There are some attractive views of the sheep themselves, gathered in flocks, and some quite good natural sound-effects.

MAGIE DU FER-BLANC (French)

Production : L'Office Technique pour l'Utilisation de l'Acier, Paris

Direction : Jean Tedesco

Photography : René Moreau

Music : Marcel Mihalovici

Length : 2,450 feet

(For particulars of distribution apply to the International Tin Research and Development Council, Manfield House, 378, Strand, London, W.C.2.)

The conscientious director who is compelled to make a film advertising the virtues of So-and-So's Best Woollen Underwear may be forgiven if his work is not in the end as spontaneous as it might have been. Happily, the publicity-film as a type need not restrict itself to such narrowly-defined objects; and in the undertakings sponsored by the larger, more generalised bodies, there is often scope for the satisfaction both of æsthetic and commercial ends. The present film, shown in this country under the auspices of the International Tin Research and Development Council, demonstrates the point to perfection.

There is no question about the thoroughness with which it covers the ground allotted to it. The manufacture of tin cans, step by step; the multifarious uses to which tin is put in ordinary life; the packing, in air-tight tin containers, of fruit and other edibles, and aspects of the latter's distribution, thus entombed: these and other circumstances, pressing upon us determinedly the value of tin to a



A scene from *ERISKAY*. See above

(Zenifilms)

civilised world, are portrayed without scamping. Yet with all this weight of detail there is never any suspicion of a too pompous or pontifical manner, nor of dullness: far from dullness, the wit and precision which have been lavished on its making carry the film through with colours flying.

The opening is perhaps too allusively cryptic, but minor weaknesses of this sort are more than counterbalanced by (in particular) the director's facility for making inanimate objects fantastically animate. The high-spot is the sardine-sequence, with its grim decapitation-machinery: the one section ruthlessly severing the rows of unresisting heads, and the other consigning the truncated torsos to an ignominious limbo; while the superimposed caption reads:—

La guillotine des sardines
attend ses victimes.

And a little further on occurs the neatest of parodies of the perpetual head-against-the-sky shot: a negro, in the approved attitude, ceremoniously devouring a solitary sardine.

The superimposed titles appear in an unaccustomed context, for they are part of the original conception of the film: as for commentary, one notes its absence with gratitude. The music, in modern style, ingeniously interprets the prevailing mood; and the whole is a novel and imaginative *tour-de-force*.

PORT OF FIVE SEAS (U.S.S.R.)

Production: Vostkino, U.S.S.R.

Direction: A. Lemberg and Lars Moen

Length: 1,600 feet. Distributors: Kinofilms

This record of a considerable engineering achievement—the linking-up by canal of the White and the Baltic Seas—is also presented to us as something more important: a social achievement, by means of which a spiritual channel was built between society and its declared enemies, between an old order and a new—an even greater constructive feat than the physical one with which it was associated. Having no data but the film itself and the written accounts,

we can still agree that the abstract magnitude of the theme, whatever its factual basis, is worthy of celebration; and may add that probably the best way in which to view the film is as a preparatory outline leading one to the published book*.

Within these limits, the film delivers its message with sufficient lucidity, if without any technical fireworks. The necessary explanations are effected by the insertion of moving diagrams and hosts of sub-titles. The sub-titles for their own part are brief and clear (one notes their basic superiority to commentary in its usual employment), and the continuity skilfully enough manoeuvred to cover in a measure the thinness and variability of the photographic material; but the latter is certainly nothing very much, and the feeble music adds a soporific quality to the later stages of the film. *Port of Five Seas* is competently put together, and does what it sets out to do, concentrating our interest on the story it unfolds—but it is hardly, for itself, a great work of art.

MIRACLES STILL HAPPEN

An interesting programme of films made by members of the Manchester Film Society was presented under the auspices of the British Film Institute recently. The chief item of the exhibition was *Miracles Still Happen*, showing the work of the Manchester Royal Hospital for Children in its various departments.

Miracles Still Happen was being shown in six public cinemas at the time of the exhibition, a fact which, in itself, speaks of its quality. It is an excellent example of the kind of film which is within the capabilities of amateurs, clearly photographed, interesting and well balanced. One of the most pleasing features of the film is the natural movements and expressions of the staff and children. The camera seems happily to have caught them unawares, and there is none of the unnatural posing which is so frequently to be found in this type of film. R. T.

**White Sea Canal*, Bodley Head Press, 12/6.



HOUSING PROBLEMS, one of a group of five films produced for the British Commercial Gas Association. A review is published on p. 176.

FILMS AND THE SCHOOL

A SECTION FOR TEACHERS

HOME-MADE DIAGRAM FILMS

By
H. D. Waley

It sometimes occurs that those who are engaged in the production of amateur documentary or teaching films wish to supplement their straight photography with diagrams. This involves, of course, the taking of a succession of single exposures, each of which must have the same length and the same light, since uneven exposure would produce a flickering effect on projection. In order to maintain a constant light it is necessary to screen the work from light and use artificial lighting. The wattage required varies in accordance with the size of the work being photographed, the exposure given, the speed of the emulsion employed, and the aperture used.

The width of the work may conveniently be in the neighbourhood of 1ft. or 18 ins., the exposure from $\frac{1}{4}$ th to a whole second or even more; a slow emulsion is preferable to a fast one, since it is cheaper and more "contrasty"—in fact, where neg-pos. work is in question positive film may be exposed in the camera. The aperture being the variable factor which is most easily regulated should be left to be finally settled by means of a trial strip showing the density resulting from a series of different apertures. Critical focussing will naturally be more easy to obtain if matters so turn out that a moderately small aperture, e.g., $f4.5$ - $f5.6$ is found suitable. The lighting required is not likely to exceed eight 100-watt lamps placed at a distance of 12 to 18 ins. from the work, or to be less than two placed as shown in full black in Fig. 2.

Obtaining uniform exposures

With regard to the means of obtaining a series of uniform exposures various methods have to be used

in accordance with the facilities which different cameras provide.

(1) To take first the most difficult case, the old-fashioned camera which has hand cranking only, but has no one-turn-one-picture attachment. In this case it is necessary to mark off the eight positions of the handle which correspond with the full uncovering of the lens by the rotating shutter, and to fix in front of the lens an ordinary still-camera shutter. Exposure is then made by using the added shutter with the handle in the "open" position.

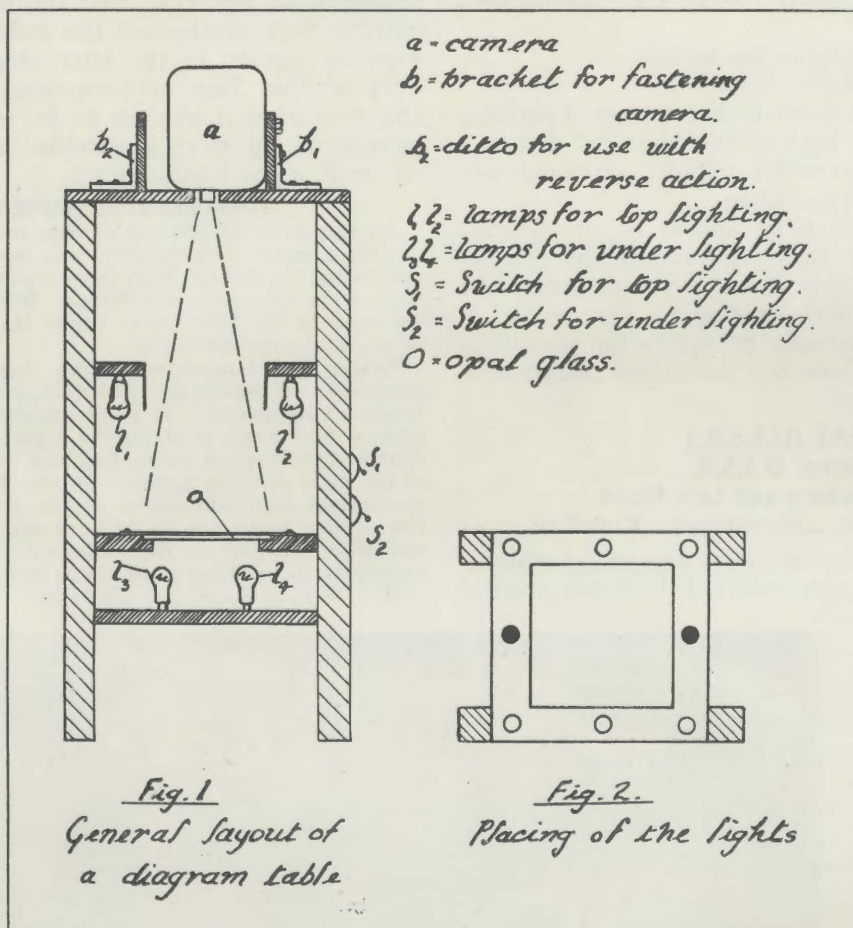
(2) The hand-cranked camera which possesses a one-turn-one-picture attachment. In this case it should be possible to dispense with the added shutter and obtain even exposures by judging the speed at which one turns the handle.

(3) The spring-driven camera which possesses one speed only. Here it is necessary to make a

hasty dab at the release button and simply expose as few frames as one's adroitness allows. The result may be the exposure of 2, 3, or 4 frames. Although this sounds a very crude method, it is reasonably effective. It must be borne in mind that the intentional grouping together of two or three identical pictures is a common labour-saving device in cartooning.

(4) The spring-driven camera which has speed variation down to eight pictures a second. This refinement should enable the exposure of single frames to be carried out by the method just described in (3).

(5) The spring-driven camera which has a special device for single exposures. Such cameras are, of



course, the best suited for diagram making. The following 16 mm. cameras have this facility: Kodak "Special," Ensign "Simplex," Bolex, Siemens, Bell-Howell "121," and Zeiss.

I do not know of any 9.5 mm. cameras with this facility except the "Bolex" and the "Dekko."

Lay-out of apparatus

The general layout of the apparatus is shown in Fig. 1. The work requires to be raised at least 2 ft. from the ground in order to be on a convenient level. The height of the camera above the work depends on the size of the work and the focal length of the lens. Data for determining this relationship can be obtained by photographing a test sheet marked with numbered squares from a series of recorded distances or by direct observation on the film where the design of the camera allows this. It is desirable to provide means of raising and lowering either the camera or the work, both in order to allow for differences in the size of the work and to obtain approaching and receding effects.

Using opal glass

A very useful refinement is to have the work pinned down to a wooden frame containing a sheet of opal glass. Opal glass has the quality of spreading evenly the light which it transmits. Accordingly, in combination with two or four lamps placed about a foot below it, it enables the work to be viewed as a transparency, when the bottom lamps are turned on and the top lamps are turned off. This possibility has a variety of practical uses. For example, it may often be useful to employ guide-lines visible to the photographer but not to the camera. If the work is mounted in the manner described the guide lines can be drawn in full black on the back of the work and referred to when desired by means of the under lighting, though when the top lamps only are lit they are invisible to the camera. Of course, on a white ground pale blue guide-lines may be used without the complication of two lighting systems, but in general it will be found better not to use a white ground, as it dazzles the eye when projected. Moreover, there is an important additional reason for the employment of a dark ground—it enables multiple exposures to be made.

Methods of cartooning

The mention of multiple exposures raises some general questions with regard to the methods of cartooning which are appropriate to the amateur. The professional cartoonist, of course, produces with the help of numerous assistants, a series of drawings on celluloid which, accurately positioned by register pins, are exposed in succession. Such a technique would almost always be too laborious for the amateur worker. He must be content to employ what is called the "cut-out" method. This involves the moving about of paper or thin card figures instead of drawing and re-drawing repeatedly. To take a simple example, we will suppose that the subject of our cartoon is a straight line which grows

and shrinks. The professional method of dealing with this would be to draw a succession of similarly placed lines with appropriate differences of length. The cut-out method would be to represent the line by means of a slit cut in a sheet of opaque material and simulate its variations of length by sliding a mask up and down it. Now supposing that it was desired to represent an expanding rectangle instead of the simple line—then the cut-out method at once suffers from the difficulty that the area enclosed keeps changing, and cannot, therefore, one might suppose, be represented except by making a corresponding number of cut-out rectangles. Actually, however, this difficulty can be met by first photographing one set of adjacent sides on the sliding mask principle, then winding the film back again to exactly the position from which a start was made, and repeating the proceeding with the two opposite sides. The Kodak "Special" and Bolex cameras both have facilities for winding backwards. The principle involved is capable of a great number of variations.

Individual ingenuity has to be exercised more actively in amateur cartooning than in any other occupation I know of. I have seen patches of black vegetable seeds scattered on a map and swept about with a paint brush used to represent constantly shifting areas of rainfall. Wherever the building up of an elaborated finale is proposed it will probably be found simpler to fix the camera upside-down, begin with the final effect, and work backwards, afterwards turning this length of film round before incorporating it with the rest. It would, however, take more space than is available to detail the deceptions which the diagram maker may advantageously practise.

H. D. W.

"THE FILM IN EDUCATION"

By F. A. Hoare

An interesting series of lecture demonstrations on "The Film in Education" was given at The Day Technical School for Girls, Fort Pitt, Chatham, during October and November last. The series was held under the auspices of the National Union of Teachers, and the lecturer was Mr. F. A. Hoare, Educational Consultant, Western Electric Company, Ltd.

The subject of Mr. Hoare's first lecture was Films in Relation to the School Curriculum. He reviewed the experimental work which has been done in England and abroad, and after dealing with the educational function of films and the effect of films on teaching technique went on to consider the place of films in the teaching of various subjects, *e.g.*, history, geography, science, music and languages. In his second lecture Mr. Hoare considered the relative merits of sound and silent films, and in his last lecture dealt with types of projectors and such questions as their cost and maintenance. He emphasised the importance of co-operation between educationalists and film producers and concluded by referring to the work of the British Film Institute and by pointing out the value of a local branch.

Each lecture lasted approximately half-an-hour and was followed by a practical demonstration of films, sound and silent, which were shown on a Western Electric portable 6mm. projector.

USING THE FILM IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

Mr. Houghton here describes how films have been used at the Liverpool Collegiate School, of which he is Vice-Principal. Other articles in this series have dealt with the film in elementary, central and rural schools, and have been contributed by teachers who are themselves experienced in the use of the film in classroom work.

By H. Houghton

IN February, 1934, the School gave itself a handsome present in the shape of a Victor (Model 3) 16 mm. silent projector, costing £70. The objects for which it was to be used were originally two: to entertain boys and parents by occasional exhibitions of films at night, and to supplement or replace the magic lantern at a series of lectures given to a school society, the "Inquirers' Club," whose membership is large and whose interests are catholic. For both these purposes the only suitable room was the School Hall. This is a galleried structure, with seating accommodation for about 1,350 people, but so shaped that not more than 800 can view a film or a lantern slide in comfort. We were at first a bit doubtful of the ability of our projector to throw an image large enough and bright enough for this number, but actually, using a home-made screen, with the projector mounted at the front of the gallery, we have obtained results which would not shame a public cinema. As these shows are given in the evening or immediately after school, and are confined to the six months from October to March, the problem of darkening the hall has not arisen in a serious form. The gallery windows were already fitted with blinds, and little light is admitted by the ground floor windows. On rare occasions, when the setting sun has intruded, sheets of brown paper have provided adequate, if inelegant, protection from its beams.

For purposes of entertainment, the projector has fully justified itself. A number of early Chaplin and Lloyd films have proved to be too archaic to appeal to adults or to the older boys, but the youngsters have been highly diverted by them, whilst a number of documentary films have been welcomed by young and old alike. Outstanding among the latter was *Grass*, a Kodak film in four reels, dealing with the periodic migration of a Persian tribe. The rest, obtained chiefly from the G.P.O. or Empire Film Libraries, have varied between excellence and mediocrity, but none have been really bad. To those who doubt whether the silent film can appeal to modern boys, I can only say "Try it, but allow plenty of time for booking. Never trust to producers' 'suitable alternatives'."

Supplementary lantern lectures

Our experience with the film as an adjunct to the lantern for lectures to the "Inquirers' Club"

mentioned above has been somewhat less happy. Two examples may serve as typical of what frequently happens. A keen bee-keeper on the staff welcomed the opportunity of showing a film as well as his own slides to illustrate his lecture. Unfortunately, a film which, from its description in the catalogue, seemed eminently suitable, proved at a preliminary showing to contain little of real value, and in some details contradicted the lecturer's words instead of illustrating them. On another occasion, a lecture was planned on two parasitic plants. The particular plants chosen were two which appeared in a list of 16 mm. silent film subjects, but the list had appeared early in 1934, and was by now (October, 1935) in several essentials out of date. The renters' addresses had been changed, and their wares, in some cases, transferred to other companies. In consequence, a fortnight of correspondence failed to reveal the new home of the films we wanted, and as time was running short, slides were made and used.

At the same time I would stress that on a few occasions we have had admirable meetings at which the film has fully justified itself. The Kodak films *The Panama Canal* and *Water Transport on the Great Lakes* (dealing largely with the Welland Canal), provided an excellent background to a lecture on famous waterways, and a number of films on bird and animal life have by their animation proved superior to the lantern slide, with its lack of movement. We are, therefore, inclined to regard ourselves as responsible, in part at least, for the various failures, through our choice of wrong films, and to believe that further effort and experience, helped by the more recent work of the producing companies, will produce more successes in future.

The projector in the classroom

In the Christmas term of 1934 we began to think of using the projector for work in the classroom. The experiment was to be restricted at first to two subjects—Physics and Biology. The reasons for this apparently curious choice were, first, that those subjects were taught in rooms which could be easily darkened, so that no dislocation of normal routine would be involved, and, secondly, that masters teaching physics and biology were the keenest advocates of the use of the film. The physics films were to be shown to two forms of average boys, one of

which was in the School Certificate year, the other a year its junior. In biology, the films were intended primarily for Sixth Form boys, some working for the Higher School Certificate, the rest taking a shorter and more general course without any examination motive. We also hoped to show the films to younger boys in the General Science course, if their contents proved suitable.

Catalogues proved to be quite inadequate as a guide in choosing films, nor were the monthly bulletins of the British Film Institute available for our assistance. However, a visit to London, and a number of hours spent in the projection theatres of several producing companies, gave us the information we required. The following films were selected and booked in November for use in the following term. By booking thus early we found that it was possible to guarantee with almost complete certainty that the chosen films would be available.

Physics :

The Behaviour
of Light
Simple Machines
Atmospheric
Pressure
Illumination
Lenses
Optical Instruments

Biology :

*Digestion
*Breathing
*Circulation
*Muscles
Microscopic
Animal Life
The Frog

These are all Kodak films, with the exception of *The Frog* which is produced by Messrs. Visual Education. The films were shown at intervals of about a fortnight.

Results and conclusions

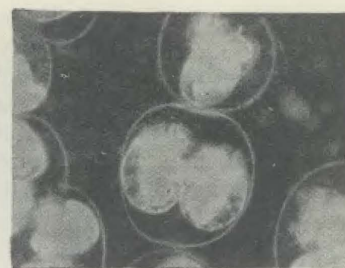
The results were interesting. It was obvious that the films did stimulate interest, particularly among the duller boys. Discussion and subsequent tests showed that all the boys were keenly observant during the showing of the films, and that they retained what they saw on the screen better than what they saw on the blackboard or in print. Those favourable conclusions were, however, largely offset by specific defects in the films themselves. The most serious of these was their length. A 400 ft. film, running for twenty minutes, is about twice as long as we want. In Physics particularly we found that too much material was included in each film. Several of those we used could, with advantage, be cut into three or four five-minute reels. A second criticism concerns captions, which were, on the whole, too long and diffuse. (In one film

Continued on next page

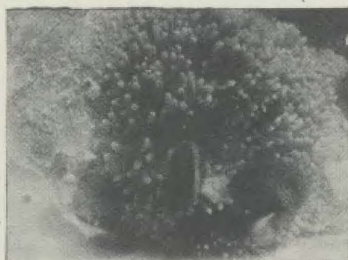
Those marked * are listed in the Kodak Medical Library Catalogue. The hiring fee is outrageously high, and a doctor's note is needed as a guarantee of proper motive for showing them. H. H.



1. Newly Hatched Chick



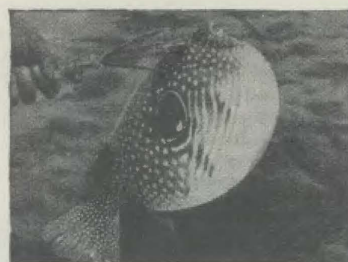
2. Sea Slug embryo



3. Giant Sea Anemone



4. Giant Clam



5. Puffer Fish



6. Turtle Laying Eggs

From Western Electric's series of films on Plant and Animal Life of Australia's Barrier Reef. 1. BIRDS OF THE BARRIER REEF. 2. SECRETS OF THE TROPICAL OCEAN. 3. CORAL AND ITS CREATURES. 4. SEA SHELLS AND THEIR INHABITANTS. 5. ODDITIES OF THE CORAL SEA. 6. THE GREAT GREEN TURTLE

NEW WESTERN ELECTRIC SERIES

Western Electric Co., Bush House, Aldwych, London, W.C.2.

Western Electric Co. have recently added to their library six films dealing with the marvels and mysteries of the Australian Barrier Reef. These films show the different types of birds to be found, such as the Noddies and Mutton Birds; microscopic photographs of minute life, such as Diatoms, Hydroids and Copepods; various types of coral, including brain, fan and white coral; the Coral Polyp. Shells and molluscs of all sizes, and the Giant Clam—a huge mollusc capable of trapping a human being between its powerful valves—are seen. One reel deals with the many adaptations employed for capturing prey, and defence against capture; the Puffer Fish, for instance, swells to such an extent that it cannot be swallowed. There are also pictures of the Great Green Turtle laying eggs, and the hatching of the young ones.

On Tuesday, November 19th, Professor Winifred Cullis, C.B.E., M.A., D.Sc., in presenting the films to an audience at the Western Electric private theatre, expressed the opinion that they would be of very real use to students and children in schools. Pictorially, she added, these films were truly amazing. She also stressed the fact that before the films were shown in the classroom it would be preferable for teachers to view them in order that they would be quite conversant with any question that might be raised by the pupils.

The series can be obtained through the Road Show Service, which can show these films for an inclusive fee which covers double projector reproducing equipment and skilled operators.

lasting fifteen minutes, half the time was occupied by explanatory captions.) Finally, we felt that much was included in the films which could be better dealt with in the laboratory or on the demonstration bench.

We are convinced that suitable films can be a great asset in the classroom, and are continuing to search for them, this time in the more promising field of Geography. We are equally sure that there will be no wide extension of the use of the cinema in this school until there is a great increase in the number of *good* films available. Only two films on the above list will find a regular place in the syllabus. *Good* films must satisfy the following conditions:—

- (a) They must be *silent*. The spoken commentary which is given on many sound films is worse than useless. It is doing our work, but doing it less well than we can do it ourselves, and makes it difficult to show the same film to pupils of differing ages and standards.
- (b) They must be *short*. We want a film lesson to run as follows:—
 - (i) brief introduction,
 - (ii) first showing (uninterrupted),
 - (iii) discussion,
 - (iv) second showing (with stops if necessary for comment).

This procedure is impossible with a film lasting more than ten minutes.

- (c) They must be *simple*. We do not want one film which deals with reflexion, refraction, shadows, and the spectrum, but four films, each dealing with one section.

- (d) Their *captions* must be *brief* and *few*. Explanation of the subject-matter is, in many cases, unnecessary; where needed, it should be given by the teacher.

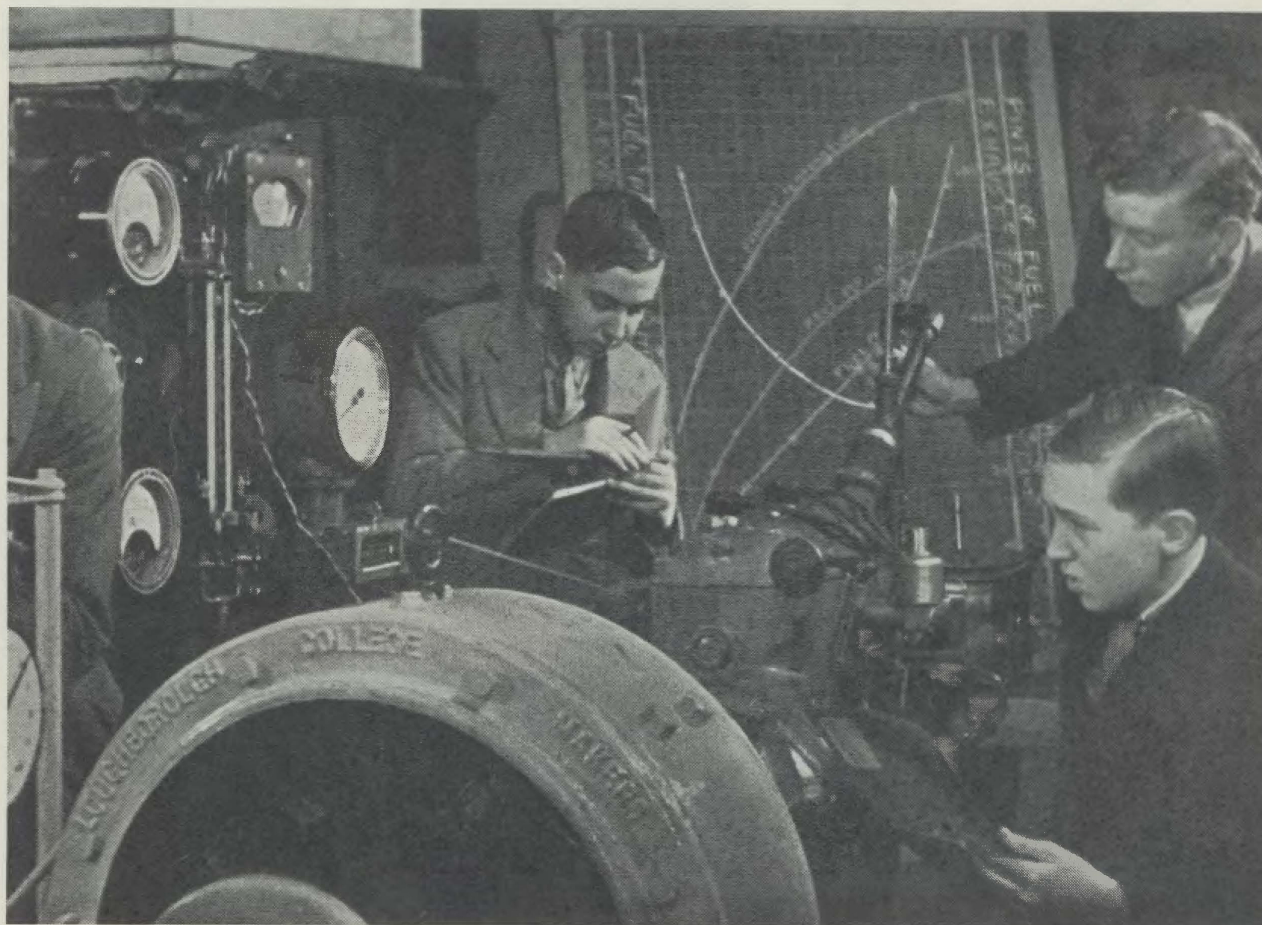
We want films like these, and we want to be able to obtain them locally instead of only by complicated ordering from London. If the producers will satisfy the first request, it is up to us to persuade administrators to tackle the second. I believe we could succeed.

'MODEL SCHOOL' WITH CINEMA IN EVERY ROOM

The new School opened at Hendon by the Duchess of Argyll is claimed to be a model for all future schools of its kind. Each room has been equipped with cinema projectors for educational films, and the fitted blackboards can be reversed for use as screens. It has been built in the form of a bungalow. The eight classrooms are ranged on the four sides of a square, which has been turfed, and the walls roll back so that in summer the scholars will be almost in the open.

The assembly hall can be used as a theatre. It has a full sized stage, fitted with stage lighting, curtains, and sound-reproducing apparatus so that school plays can be performed and talking films shown.

The school is the latest of twenty-one elementary schools built by the Hendon Council during the last seven years at a cost of more than £250,000.



A scene from *CITIZENS OF THE FUTURE*, showing a class of boys in a modern school workshop. It was produced with the co-operation of the National Union of Teachers by G.B. Instructional, Ltd., and was shown for the first time at the World Education Conference, Oxford

WHAT ARE THE ESSENTIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EDUCATIONAL FILM ?

Mr. Max Kaufmann is well known in connection with the Dance-Kaufmann "cycle" films. He here suggests that the educational film movement would gain considerably by the adoption of a new nomenclature.

By
Max Kaufmann

ONE of the chief difficulties of the educational film movement is the lack of suitable nomenclature; the title of this article affords a delightful example. The title is a question which asks for a definition of the qualities of films which are suitable for school use and not, as might be thought, for a definition of the qualities which are common to all films which have any educational value whether in the school, cinema or home. Before the title question can be answered we shall have to consider whether all the films which are suitable for school use have a common object and common qualities.

Those who use the film know very well that in the moving picture there is a profusion of detail and that the normal child which has sat in front of the screen for ten minutes will usually have a good general

impression of what it has seen, but no wide detailed knowledge of the scenes. It is, in fact, in much the same condition as the child which has been hurried along a busy street; it has become aware of the hurry, the noise, the vehicles, the buildings, the colour, and a few details here and there, but send it into the street alone and it is dazed. Yet that introduction is a real and necessary experience for the child, and the introduction to other experiences by way of the continuous film is also real and necessary.

"Excursive" films

Such films as those which give general impressions without intending to convey exact and detailed knowledge have been called "Background" films. The word is unfortunate; it is used half apologetically and it does not mean what is intended. "Background" conveys the idea of obscurity, unimportance



Another scene from CITIZENS OF THE FUTURE, reviewed on p. 178.

(G.B.D.)



THE FAMILY LIFE OF
THE GOLDEN EAGLE,
distributed by
Zenifilms

and incompleteness, but I regard these films as providing excursions for the child into an unknown world. They are real, brilliant, prominent, and of first importance, and I have suggested that they be named "Excursive Films."

Excursive films have been produced in great variety and of the highest quality. They have already established their importance and utility in schools, and in respect of the quantity available they dominate the present film supply.

Yet in spite of the quantity and quality of excursives, those who use films in school know that they are not altogether satisfied with the film supply. Because of this there is a tendency to condemn the good films which are available without making the necessary analysis which will reveal the truth.

"Incurative" films

Excursives do not satisfy completely because many teachers expect them to give more than they contain. Let us return to the child which is taken down the busy street: if it is to be told of all the different things which can be bought the teacher must move slowly and systematically. He does not rush the child past the greengrocer's shop if he wishes to show it all the kinds of fruits and vegetables which can be seen there, but takes it into the shop and explains the details carefully. The attention of the child must be concentrated on one kind of fruit at a time, and if bananas are being shown to it, they must not be exhibited on a background of blackberries. These incursions into shops each have their definite object, and I have suggested that those

films which are used to guide the child into a careful exploration of the deeper details of knowledge should be called "Incurative Films."

Relatively few Incurative films have been made, and it is the lack of them which troubles the teaching world — or rather the more progressive part of it which uses the cinema.

Differences in the two types

Excursive and Incurative films are opposed in their

particular spheres. The Excursive is adventurous and exploratory, and it is appropriate that it should be largely independent of the detailed curriculum of the school and accepted by the teacher as an external contribution to school work. Incuratives are detailed and analytical; it is essential that they should interlock closely with the work of the class and should be selected and arranged by the teacher at his will, being regarded as a supply of raw material which the teacher assembles with his other illustrations and aids to form his presentation of the subject.

Excursive films normally take the form of continuous picture narratives of events which are illustrated in their ordinary circumstances. Their showing time may be anything from a few minutes to an hour or more. Each Excursive film contains an event sequence which, being planned by teachers in the first instance, is assumed to meet the average need within the wide latitude of this kind of film, but thereafter the teacher cannot control it, although he can add his own commentary if he wishes.

On the other hand, the Incurative film normally takes the form of an illustration of an isolated event which is abstracted from its ordinary circumstances to the exclusion of nearly all irrelevant matter. The showing time of the event may be anything from a few seconds to several minutes, but the same event may be shown more than once. Because Incurative films in the ideal form contain only single events, the question of sequence within the film does not arise, but the sequence of the films within the class lecture, and their relation to other

illustrations and aids are at the disposal of the teacher.

In relatively restricted fields much good work has been done to develop the technique of use of Incursive film, and several important sub-classifications are recognised, but space does not permit me to discuss them here.

The manufacture of teaching film is a difficult and complicated matter. The success of the cinema does not depend alone on the production of isolated

good films, but on a carefully organised programme of production which, in the final result, provides in each section of a subject the films necessary to a complete teaching scheme in that section. Such a film service must consist of a balanced supply of both Excursive and Incursive film from which the teacher can make his selection. A supply which remains incomplete in any section can be compared with a volume from which some of the leaves are missing.

MANCHESTER EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT

A comprehensive report on the use of films and wireless in schools, based on months of experiment, has been presented to the Manchester Corporation by Mr. W. O. Lester Smith, Director of Education for Manchester.

The section of the Report dealing with films begins by giving details of the projectors used in the experiment, and particulars of accommodation and screens; some general conclusions then follow as to desirable points in a projector.

For the purpose of the experiment, one film was made by the Manchester Education Committee, 36 were hired, and 60 borrowed without charge.

The free films were mainly from the G.P.O. Library. Hiring films is at present expensive, but it is probable that the cost will diminish as the demand increases.

The Report states that the schools mainly used travel, science and nature films. The few science films were not very satisfactory; they dealt mainly with experiments which could have been done more effectively in the Science Room. The teachers felt that the film should only be used for those subjects that cannot be treated as well without its aid.

The general conclusions reached on the supply of films are:—

1. That there should be an adequate supply of films specially prepared for teaching purposes.
2. That there should be a central library of films for each area.

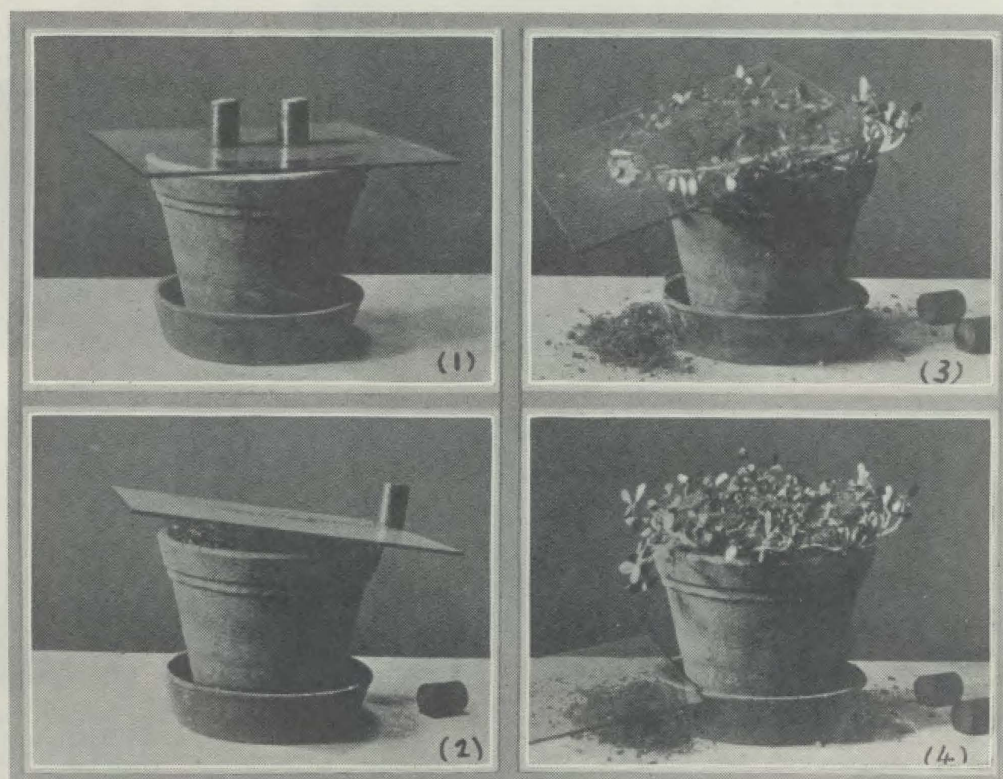
3. That there should be a projection room so that films could be seen before being borrowed.

Other matters dealt with in the Report include the ages of the children, size of class, and organisation and sequence of lessons. It was pointed out that by varying the method of presentation it was possible to use most films for a number of classes. It was felt to be a mistake to show to two classes simultaneously for such reasons as the difference of mentality of the classes, overheating of atmosphere, inconveniences of seating accommodation.

The general conclusions drawn include:

1. The film is a useful aid to teaching and an economical way of giving experience.
2. The film is stimulating in its effects.
3. The film is stimulating to the teacher and brings reality to his own experience and teaching as no other medium can.
4. It makes for originality of expression and enriches the vocabulary.
5. To a generation of film conscious children the film makes an added link between outside life and the school.
6. Films can do much to make education more coherent and vital by relating it to life.
7. The wise use of films in schools can be a means of leading the children to form sound standards of judgment through which a discriminating taste in films may be developed.

One of the instructional films produced by the German firm UFA: FEATS OF STRENGTH BY PLANTS. The numbers indicate the sequence of shots



HOW TO USE CLASSROOM FILMS

HANDBOOKS TO AID TEACHERS

By J. A. Lauwerys, Lecturer and Tutor in the University of London Institute of Education

Mr. Lauwerys discusses how far the handbooks now being issued by producing firms in connection with their educational films may assist the teacher in using the film as an aid in classroom work.

Teachers' handbooks are issued *inter alia* by :—
WESTERN ELECTRIC COMPANY.

"Energy and its Transformations,"

"Molecular Theory,"

"Electrostatics," etc.

G.-B. INSTRUCTIONAL FILMS BUREAU. Some 25 books, e.g.,

"Looper Caterpillars,"

"Physical Education, Boys, aged 10,"

"Roots,"

"The Cathode Ray Oscillograph," etc.

KODAK. (Eastman Teaching Films Inc.).

"Simple Machines,"

"Optical Instruments,"

"Salt," etc.

In spite of wide publicity and intensive propaganda, films are still very seldom used in the classroom as an aid to ordinary teaching. Conversations

with teachers lead to the conclusion that their comparative reluctance to press more strongly for the adoption of the new medium is largely connected with two fundamental reasons: they are doubtful of its efficacy, and they do not believe that it can be used to stimulate real activity on the part of children.

Using films in the classroom

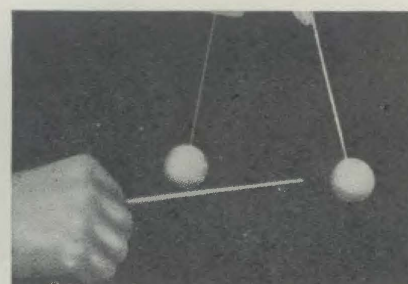
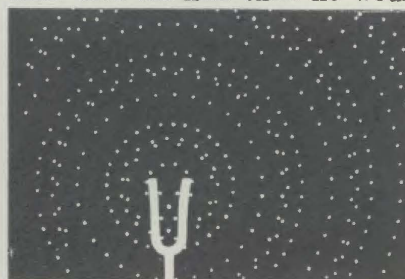
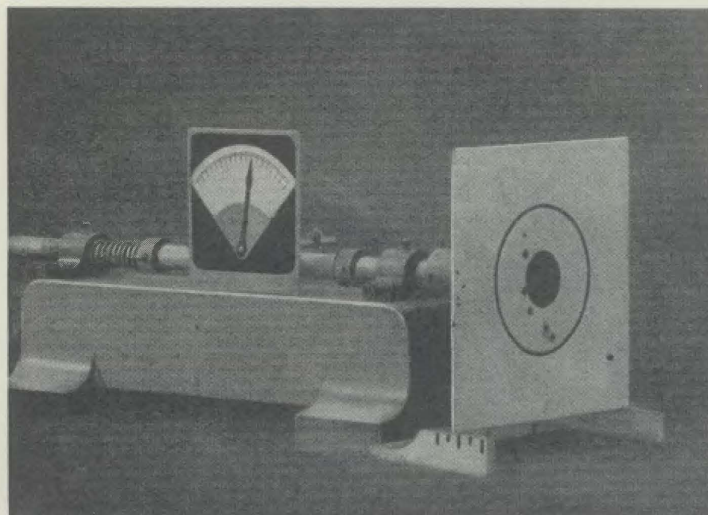
Actually, quite a number of films now being produced are excellent, and it is probable that a very great improvement in their educational quality could not well be expected. What is really needed is an improvement in the way they are used in the classroom. Now, true effectiveness is the fruit of intimate acquaintance with the instrument used and, as a rule, the teacher does not know thoroughly the film he is showing to his class.

This very desirable familiarity with a particular film can be obtained most easily by purchasing it and then using it repeatedly: most easily, perhaps, but not most cheaply, and financial considerations rule out this course for any but the most wealthy schools.

A compromise can be attempted. The handbooks now being issued by the larger producing firms do give the scenario and, in the case of sound-films, the spoken commentary as well. By studying these, the teacher will probably obtain a better acquaintance with the film than he would by merely

seeing it once or twice.

These handbooks, however, offer much wider opportunity



A series of physical science films in connection with which Western Electric have issued Teachers' Handbooks. The films were produced by the University of Chicago; they have been re-edited for use in this country and are available through the Western Electric Hiring Service. From left to right. Above: MOLECULAR THEORY OF MATTER, SOUND WAVES AND THEIR SOURCES. Below: ENERGY AND ITS TRANSFORMATIONS, OXIDATION AND REDUCTION, ELECTROSTATICS

From **STAND UP AND BREATHE**, a documentary film produced by British Utility Films for the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis. Distributed by L.M.B.

ities than this. Careful study will show that by following the advice they contain we would go far towards solving our second difficulty: how to use a film to stimulate real activity rather than passive absorption on the part of pupils. This cannot be secured without very careful preparation of

lessons. In ordinary teaching this need is not so evident partly because there is a large body of traditional technique which younger teachers gradually acquire from their more experienced colleagues. The preparation of a good lesson may take years, it may result from numerous improvements and alterations carried out as a result of experience gained with successive classes. But the whole of this body of knowledge does not yet exist in the case of a medium of instruction as novel as the cinema. For instance, we are not quite certain as to where the film should be stopped (*e.g.*, obviously, in the case of somewhat complex diagrams) or where it could usefully be reversed (*e.g.*, obviously in the case of all cyclic processes). Again, the auxiliary use of experiments, blackboard work, maps, diagrams raises problems of technique which are not yet fully solved.

Use of handbooks

While it cannot be claimed that the present handbooks have tackled these problems in thorough manner, they do, at any rate, attempt to give excellent advice which is the result of lengthy experience. It is pleasant to see, for instance, that in some of them easy auxiliary experiments and observations are suggested. Besides this, they contain most useful and acceptable suggestions both for preliminary preparation work and for the essential follow-up. Far too many film lessons are less effective than they might be through omission of these. Although in a few cases it may be best to show a film straight off, usually it will be found preferable to prepare the pupils' minds for it by making certain that their interest in the subject has been aroused, and that they do know the facts assumed. Again, after showing, it is still necessary to drive home the lesson and to emphasise the



principal points learnt, by careful questioning, by repetition, by further lessons, by notes and written exercises. To exhibit a film requires a good deal of work on the part of the teacher: the room has to be darkened, the projector set up, the films obtained, etc. Only by taking much care, both before and after showing, will all this trouble be justified and time gained rather than lost. Lastly it should be added that the handbooks also help the teacher to select suitable films by stating clearly the purpose of the film and the kind of class or institution for which it is intended. It cannot, however, be claimed that their statement of aims is in any way sufficient. In all cases, these are too vague and too elastic to help the teacher to focus and to unify his lesson really effectively.

This discussion by no means exhausts the possible use that could be made of these new handbooks. But enough has been said to show that they do represent a very serious attempt to spread more widely a knowledge of intelligent film-using. If the books are to be still further improved, it will be essential for teachers to send in comments and suggestions. It is essential to progress for the closest possible co-operation between teacher and producer to be fostered.

The compilers are very careful to avoid giving the impression that any attempt is being made to supplant the teacher or to restrict his sphere of action. They need have no fear. Teachers are always very busy—and the better they are, the busier they become. They will welcome with open arms anything which is calculated to help them in their work or to lessen their burden of preparation. Besides, if anyone finds the advice given unnecessary it can very easily be ignored!

BANTU EXPERIMENT FILMS

Five of the films made in the course of the Bantu Educational Kinema experiment were shown at Edinburgh House, Eaton Gate, the London headquarters of the experiment, on December 19th.

The first was a propaganda film made to advocate the use of the Post Office Savings Bank.

The film is given in the form of a short drama, depicting a wise native labourer who banks his earnings and a foolish one who hides them under his bed in a hole in the ground, whence, in due course, a thief removes them. The thief is identified without the tiresome subtleties of detective work which European films would certainly have dragged in and a most spirited chase follows. Definite evidence of increased Savings Bank deposits after showings of the film have reached the Unit.

The second film was a knockabout farce devoid of educational implications, devised and acted by natives. The women's parts were played by boys, as the women were unwilling to act. No striking innovation in the world's comic repertoire was attempted (custard pies and bludgeons were the order of the day), but the zest of the acting was infectious and the film is most popular among the natives.

The third film dealt with soil erosion, and made clear the function performed by vegetation in preventing the washing away of the fertile top soil by the heavy tropical rains. Effective use was made of simple diagram work.

The fourth film dealt with co-operative marketing. Robbed of its commentary, it was a little difficult to follow.

The fifth film dealt with miscellaneous scenes and objects familiar to the natives, its purpose being to accustom them to the idea of seeing moving pictures on a screen.

The Unit is to be congratulated on the promising beginning made in these films. H.D.W.

TEACHERS AS AMATEUR CINEMATOGRAPHERS

AMATEUR cinematographers and teachers will be interested in the activities of the Experimental Group of the Glasgow Branch of the Scottish Educational Film Association.

This society has been in existence for about a year and has just overcome its initial difficulties. The members are mostly teachers and their chief aim is the production of educational films.

In addition to camera work some of the members are using projectors for teaching purposes in both day schools and Continuation Classes.

A syllabus of winter activities has been drawn up and each member in turn fills the chair and contributes his moiety.

Demonstration lectures on "Production," "Processing," "Colour," and "Filters," have been given, and a lecture on "Exposure Metres," by W. McKay, has been arranged for 14th February.

The Group intends to hold an exhibition early in the New Year.

Information may be had from J. C. Elder, Esq., The Studio, 129, Bath Street, Glasgow, C.2.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE CINEMA IN SCHOOL

by W. H. George, B.Sc. Pitman. 3s. 6d. net.

The publishers, Mr. John Grierson, Film Officer, G.P.O., who contributes a foreword, and the author himself all stress the fact that this book is written by a teacher with experience both in the use and making of educational films. Mr. George has made a documentary film of the Hebrides. He has also helped to run a cinema for children, an experiment which began in April, 1931, and which still continues. In his classroom teaching (his special subject, one gathers, is geography) Mr. George is a constant user of films and advocates their frequent and, in fact, daily use, but "twenty minutes film a day is a very large allowance for one pupil."

When Mr. George is dealing with technical matters, he is useful and adequate. One cannot help feeling, when reading the accounts of his experiments, that he is entirely in his element when engaged on a practical job. He is probably just as admirable when occupied in teaching a class with the aid of a film. But it is surprising that after four years of research Mr. George has so little to say. Altogether he only succeeds in giving brief, scrappy descriptions of what he has done, from which he draws a few desultory conclusions. He fails utterly when he endeavours to deal with any subject which is not purely empirical. In fact he goes so far as to confess that "research as to the learning process must be carried out by competent psychologists. Their experiments are not the teacher's practice." This absence of original observation is a great disappointment to those who have learned to appreciate Mr. George's pioneer work as a user and maker of films.

His chapters on such comprehensive matters as "Films and the Learning Process," "Films and History," and "Films and Science" each occupy no more than two scantily filled pages of letterpress and give only fragmentary information, most of which has been more convincingly dealt with by others.

Fortunately, the book is tastefully and profusely illustrated, mainly with stills from G.P.O. sources. Groups of these illustrations are arranged to show the extensive nature of film material and "the type of scene which arouses emotional response." But no attempt is made to estimate the nature or the implications of this emotional response. In fact it is hardly defined and never analysed. No assessment is made of its place and value in education.

But, despite these deficiencies, after reading the whole book, the reader will have gained a rough epitome of the use of the film in teaching, and here and there he will get sudden glimpses of the author's latent wisdom. It is significant, for instance, that Mr. George is yet another expert who believes that "it is doubtful whether all the films schools require will ever be made commercially without some form of subsidy. Public libraries are helped by grants and there is no reason why the films required should not be financed in a similar manner." Mr. George also considers that "the training of teachers must be done before there can be widespread use of the cinema in school" and that "there is too much prominence given to the fact that there are educational films, and too little attention is given to the teacher's use of these aids." In his preface he gives it as his opinion that "as it is vital that the film should serve the teacher . . . using the film camera is no less important than using the film projector."

Written as a popular book, *Cinema in School* will probably have a large sale. It is another example of a type of handbook for which there seems to be a demand. But, however popular and instructional books are intended to be, that is no reason why they should be devoid of style and intellectual appeal, and since many of these books are written by teachers for teachers, that fact alone should be a criterion of the highest standard of quality, both in the matter of content and expression. F. W.

Pudovkin as Fedya and Vvedensky, actor, as the informer in *THE LIVING CORPSE*

Reproduced from "Film Acting" reviewed below.



FILM ACTING. A Course of Lectures delivered at the State Institute of Cinematography, Moscow, by V. I. Pudovkin. Translated from the Russian by Ivor Montagu. George Newnes. 1935. 7s. 6d.

The central thesis of Pudovkin's latest book can be summarised quite briefly. The value of the film as an art medium lies in its ability to embrace the complex reality of the present day; that is to say, its power lies in its ability to use numerous relatively short scenes. The work of the stage actor is discontinuous; he says a few lines and then disappears from the stage until his next entry. Yet it is a prime necessity for him to overcome this discontinuity, to create both in his own mind and in the minds of his spectators, a unified living image; this creative work is done in the theatre mainly during rehearsals.

The discontinuity is even greater in the case of the film actor. Here, however, there is as great a necessity for him to create a unified living image of the person he is portraying; the making of a film, Pudovkin emphasises, is not solely a matter of editing. This gives rise to the problem: How can we design methods of overcoming the film actor's feeling of discontinuity without surrendering one iota of the film's characteristic power to use a large number of relatively short shots? These methods, once we have discovered them, will be the conditioning methods of the film actor's technique.

The solutions which Pudovkin suggests are mainly two. First, attempts should be made to create a unified image by careful rehearsal work, as Stanislavski did in the theatre; and special "acting scripts" for rehearsal purposes should be devised. Secondly, and even more importantly, he stresses the need for an actor to understand the full significance of the edited image. Those devices of intonation, make-up and gesture which the stage actor uses are replaced in the film by camera angle, duality of sound and image and similar devices and it is essential that the film actor should understand their use. Finally Pudovkin argues that in order to act sincerely, the actor should not only have some say in the choice of his role, but also that there should be collaboration between scenarist, actor and director whilst the details of the story are actually being worked out and this again demands a knowledge of film technique on the part of the actor.

This book is certainly the most outstanding work on its subject to date. It goes to the essentials of one of the central problems of film production and contains a wealth of implications and references indirectly concerned with the central subject, as is inevitable in the work of a writer who is himself film actor, film director and one of the foremost film theoreticians of our time. The book reveals some interesting developments on his earlier writings. It contains a definite warning that the importance of editing can be over-emphasised if it is carried so far as to deny the necessity for accomplished film acting. There is also a definite denial that the writer has ever suggested a predominant use of non-actors in films. Such apparent changes of opinion no doubt spring, as the translator at one point suggests, from an enthusiasm for each problem-of-the-hour. One serious error is the assertion that in the case of a film its quality as a work of art is fixed once and for all at the time of production and can be conveyed to any audience. This is the more surprising in view of his previous statement that each work of art is an act of

collective perception of reality involving artist, the work created *and the spectator*. Clearly the value of a film must depend largely on the sensibility of the audience to which it is shown. It is important to remember this in view of the fact that the raising of standards of film appreciation may depend largely on the development of specialised audiences.

The translation is a competent one. Occasionally some curious inversions and suspensions intrude on the reader's attention and there is a pedantic use of the optative tense and of such words as "optimum" and "maximum" for best or greatest.

In conclusion one wonders how far the book will influence current practice in the film industry, how far indeed its influence may be limited by the fact that the author tackles his problem so thoroughly that the ideal solutions which he is led to suggest may prove to be impracticable.

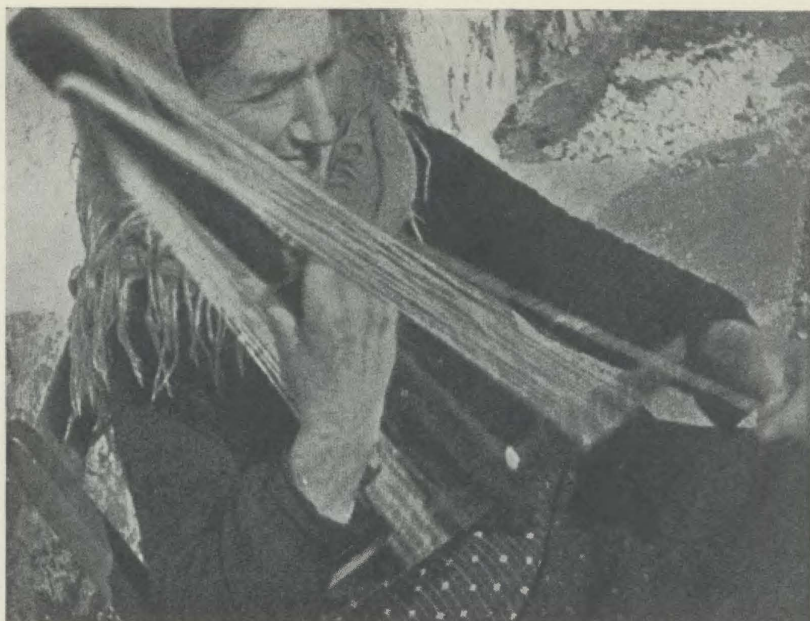
E. H. L.

HOMMAGE À LOUIS LUMIÈRE

The well-known French weekly *La Cinematographie Française* has issued a special number under the above title.

It contains a very interesting series of articles on what one of the writers aptly terms "the prehistory" of the cinema, contributed by veterans of the industry. The first chapters deal, naturally, with the part played in the industry by the brothers Lumière themselves. It appears that they saw one of Edison's peepshow "Kinetoscopes" in Paris in 1894. These, of course, showed a continuously moving film to a single spectator at a time. The brothers realised at once that the scope of the invention would be immensely enlarged if it could be made to project a large image on a screen. They further saw that the essential step towards this was the imparting to the film of a rapid "stop and start" movement.

During a sleepless night occasioned by some minor illness, Louis Lumière conceived in its entirety the design for a mechanism which would accomplish this. Next morning Auguste, coming into his room with condolences and enquiries, was greeted with a shower of technical exposition. The Lumière cam and claw movement, even now so familiar to every owner of a Pathé 9.5 mm. projector, thus came into being. The American Armat, of course, solved the same problem almost simultaneously with a rudimentary Maltese cross. M. Lumière's numerous other photographic inventions are also described in some detail. The chapters which follow teem with curious and valuable information. How many people realise that the early silent films were accompanied by a spoken commentary because film footage was too valuable to be taken up by sub-titles, or that the cinema was used for recording surgical operations as early as 1898? Sundry variations of opinion on important dates emphasise the appropriateness of the term



A shot from W. H. George's film of the Hebrides, *THE OUTER ISLES*. Reproduced from *The Cinema in School*, by W.H.George, reviewed on p. 192

"Prehistory." Thus one article gives 1907 as the date when film hiring began to displace film-selling in France while another puts it as late as 1917.

It would clearly be valuable if a similar symposium of the recollection of English veterans could be collected.

H. D. W.

A NATIONAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF EDUCATIONAL FILMS AND 16mm. APPARATUS AVAILABLE IN GREAT BRITAIN. Published by the Central Information Bureau for Educational Films. One guinea.

The main purpose of this work is to give a complete and classified list of all the films available for educational use in this country. This main section is prefaced by a number of general articles on the use of films in schools and followed by an article on projection technique and manipulation; a list of 16mm. projectors, sound and silent, with full details of each projector; a number of tables relating to lenses and picture sizes; a list of cameras and other production accessories, and a bibliography.

The purpose of the preliminary articles is not clear. They consist of direct reprints from the *Educational Film Review* and have all the characteristics of occasional pieces. They are general and repetitive. If their purpose is to persuade teachers of the advantages of using films, those advantages are not well and clearly summarised; they become lost in generalities. Only the Eastman Kodak experiment is cited; it is referred to in two separate places and on the second occasion is summarised in some detail. One could have wished in a work of this kind for a more complete summary of such experiments, including those carried out by British educational authorities, as in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Middlesex. Where a book has entailed so much careful industry as the present one, it surely deserves a specially written preface. It is a pity that the contribution by Mr. H. D. Waley on projection technique and manipulation should be relegated to the end among appendices and tables. It could very well have formed the sole introduction, and an excellent one.

The film catalogue, which constitutes the main section of the book, is certainly the most comprehensive which has as yet been compiled. It covers nearly 3,000 films supplied by a large number of distributors. The films are grouped under subject heads. The main classification, however, is not a subject one but is according to width and type of film. The subject classification is further confused by the fact that under each subject head films are grouped in separate lists for each distributor and within those lists the films appear to be in no particular order. Thus one film on the cuckoo is given on page 130 and the next one on page 133. A more adequate classification system would have brought them together.

Perhaps the gravest omission in a work designed for the guidance of teachers is the absence of any indication of the quality of the films or of their suitability for particular schools and classes. Even the contents of the films given are often inadequate and sometimes non-existent. The catalogue is in the main a classified collection of the information supplied by the catalogues of individual distributors. This is no criticism of the editors of the book. In bringing out a catalogue of this kind one must inevitably choose, under present conditions, between compiling a work that is comprehensive but uncritical and the slower method of having each film viewed and criticised by qualified authorities. The present catalogue chooses the former method; the latter is being adopted in the Educational Film Bulletin which the British Film Institute issues each month. Each work has its own merits and use.

In the technical section, the particulars given of projection are a little puzzling. By "size of picture" is presumably meant maximum size which could be properly lit, but even this would be a vague definition if unaccompanied by specified strength of light. It is difficult to see why "length of throw" is included. This varies, as at least one firm states, according to lens, and can easily be derived from the very valuable tables provided in the next section. "Size of lens" is also an unusual phrase; focal length of lens and aperture of lens are what one would wish to know. Details of sound projectors give no indication of sound output in watts. A number of firms appear to be omitted altogether; no mention is made of the Ampro and Agfa silent 16mm. projectors, the Ampro 16mm. sound projector, the Cinex 16mm. camera, Gevaert 16mm. film stock, and the Abbot and Cinecraft 16mm. titlers.

Omissions, as the editors recognise and emphasise, are bound to exist. No review of the book could ignore them without doing a disservice both to the educational film and to the publishers of the book. Yet one cannot help feeling a little uncharitable in having so to criticise what remains, when all is said, a most valuable pioneer effort. It is the only work of its kind to guide teachers at the present time and one to which all users of non-theatrical films will turn again and again.

E. H. L.

THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION: ITS HISTORY AND ACTIVITIES. 54 pp. The American Council on Education, 744, Jackson Place, Washington, D.C.

The American Council on Education has just published a booklet on its history and activities. During the past year it has carried on an intensive investigation of the possibilities for greater use of motion pictures in education. A recent grant to the Council has enabled a small staff interested in the use of films to make certain basic studies in this field, and the report gives an outline of the preliminary surveys.

The present work of the Council in this department is being supervised in Washington by Dr. Edgar Dale, of Ohio State University, who was active in the Payne Studies of the motion picture.

WHAT THE BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE IS DOING

WORK OF THE QUARTER

National Film Library

DURING the last quarter the work of the National Film Library has made considerable progress. So ready has been the response to its appeal for films for school distribution that the Library hopes to begin distribution, and to issue its first catalogue, before the end of January. The catalogue will contain details of at least fifty films, covering such subjects as geography, travel, mathematics, agriculture and such industrial subjects as canning, brewing, tyres, oil, cars, fountain pens, tin and tar.

The films will be available for a nominal charge to schools, institutes and similar bodies and to members of the Film Institute. The issuing of this catalogue will mark the first step in the building up of that centralised system of educational film distribution which the Governors of the Institute wish to see realised.

The collection of films of historical value is also growing and it is intended to make a number of these available in sub-standard editions as well. There is strong evidence that illustrative examples of the historical development of the film, such as these, would be widely welcomed by film societies of all kinds throughout the country.

Meetings held during the Quarter

The Institute has been giving active assistance to various bodies during the past quarter. The following are among those which have requested the Institute to provide speakers and in some cases also to arrange demonstrations in connection with their meetings:

- Bath Education Society.
- Bath Soroptimists' Club.
- Blackburn Teachers' Association (National Union of Teachers).
- Central Lancashire Association of Assistant Mistresses.
- Cheshunt and Waltham Cross Association (National Union of Teachers).
- Halifax Teachers' Association (National Union of Teachers).
- League of Nations Union (Junior Branches Week-end Conference).
- London Head Teachers' Association.
- Loughborough College Film Society.
- National Association of Teachers in Selective Central Schools.
- New Barnet Literary and Debating Society.
- North Staffs. W.E.A., Tunstall Branch (Saturday School).
- Reading University Education Society.
- Royal Photographic Society (Kinematography Exhibition).

Runcorn and District Association (National Union of Teachers).

St. Albans and District Association (National Union of Teachers).

University of Leeds.

Walthamstow Educational Settlement.

West Ham Teachers' Association (National Union of Teachers).

West Yorkshire County Association (National Union of Teachers).

The speakers at these meetings included Mr. A. C. Cameron (Governor of the British Film Institute), Mr. F. A. Ring (Education Panel, British Film Institute), Rev. F. Heming Vaughan (Chairman of the Merseyside Film Institute Society), Mr. G. J. Cons (Education Panel, British Film Institute), Mr. W. Farr (British Film Institute) and Mr. A. Vesselo.

The subjects dealt with included the use of films for educational purposes, the work of the British Film Institute, amateur cinematography, the use of films in peace movements, the documentary film and the film public and its reactions.

These meetings were in addition to those arranged by the branches of the Institute and additional also to those arranged by the Scottish Film Council or addressed by members of the Scottish Film Council.

London County Council

The London County Council has now become a subscribing member of the British Film Institute.

Deputation to County Councils Association

A deputation of the British Film Institute waited upon the Education Committee of the County Councils Association at the Guildhall on November 7th to put before them the possibilities of educational films, and the services which the British Film Institute can render to authorities. The County Councils Association expressed themselves as much interested, and it was hoped that a demonstration or demonstrations of educational films might be arranged. The case for the deputation was put by Mr. A. C. Cameron, a Governor of the Institute, and others who attended were Mr. R. S. Lambert, Mr. C. M. Woolf, Dr. B. Gregory, Mr. G. Peverett and the Secretary of the Institute.

Exhibition of Educational Films

At the request of the Executive Committee of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Conference of Educational Associations the British Film Institute presented a programme of educational films at the Dominion Theatre, Tottenham Court Road, on Saturday, January 4th, at 10 a.m. The programme lasted about one-and-a-half hours and consisted of silent

and sound films on Geography, Physics, Biology, Natural History, Physical Education, etc., which are available on 16 mm. stock. The following are the firms which took part in the demonstration:

R. Gibson & Sons—Spring—The Lambs; Spring—In the Fields; Grain Harvest; Sheep Shearing
 Steuart Films—Generation of the Ellipse; Harmonic Motions; Electrophorus; Electric Valves (All Dance-Kaufmann "cycle" films)
 Western Electric Company—Molecular Theory of Matter
 Visual Education—Social Wasps]
 Gaumont-British Equipments—Progressive Stages in Ball Handling Games; The Sea Urchin
 British Instructional Films—Scarlet Runner & Co.; Short-Eared Owl.

Science Committee

The Science Committee is preparing a report on science teaching films. A questionnaire has been prepared and circulated and a number of replies have been received. The question of films for vocational guidance is being dealt with by a small sub-committee appointed by the Science Committee.

Entertainment Panel

The Entertainment Panel has appointed a special sub-committee to draw up a memorandum on the ways by which, with the assistance of renters, exhibitors and local education authorities, performances of special films for children can be arranged. This sub-committee is also considering whether any of the suggestions put forward for assisting the organisation of special children's performances can be applied to the difficulties encountered by film societies in arranging special shows.

Medical Panel

The Catalogue of British Medical Films compiled by the Medical Panel of the Institute has just been published, and copies are available from the Institute free to members, price 1s. to non-members. The catalogue is a comprehensive one and includes films dealing with over thirty branches of medicine.

As we go to press we learn with the deepest regret of the death of Dr. R. G. Canti. Dr. Canti was an active member of the Medical Panel of the British Film Institute, and his work in connection with the film and medical research is widely known. An appreciation of Dr. Canti's work will be included in the next issue of SIGHT AND SOUND.

Monthly Film Bulletin

The Bulletin of film reviews issued each month by the Institute now includes a section on documentary films. It has long been felt that this country's greatest contribution to the development of the film has been in the documentary field, a fact which has received international recognition at the International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art in Venice, and more recently at the Brussels Film Festival (see page 155). In spite of this, documentary films are reviewed inadequately (if at all) in the Press.

The Institute now intends to cover regularly all such films as they are produced, and to make the new section of the Bulletin a complete and reliable guide. The Bulletin is now available to associate members at 2d. a copy through the Film Institute Societies.

The Royal Photographic Society

The third exhibition of Kinematography organised by the Royal Photographic Society was opened on Saturday, November 9th, by Mr. A. C. Cameron, one of the Governors of the Institute. Mr. Cameron spoke of the work and aims of the Institute. He mentioned in particular the activities of the branches and how those activities affected the ordinary person who is interested in cinematography, from any side—technical, cultural or entertainment. Mr. Cameron also explained the objects for which the National Film Library had been established. In conclusion he mentioned the mutual interests of the Royal Photographic Society and the British Film Institute—the joint interest in preservation of films of scientific importance, in circulation of films which were examples of beautiful and skilful photography, in the work being done on the continent, and in future developments bearing in mind that television is no longer something right away on the horizon.

It seemed to him that those interested in the film from different points of view might very well come together under the general ægis of the Film Institute in the form of branches which will receive the literature of the Institute, discuss film matters, make their own films, hold their own exhibitions, and perhaps run their own Film Society and encourage the owners of the principal cinemas in their area to show the kind of film for which they can guarantee a market.

The closing meeting of the series arranged in connection with the Exhibition was held on November 30th, when Mr. W. Farr, Assistant General Manager of the British Film Institute, gave a brief talk on the scope of amateur film-making. He referred to the influence of amateur cinematography in inducing a more critical attitude towards the films seen in public cinemas, and in leading to a demand for types of films rarely seen and for a higher standard of film production. He suggested that the most worth-while films being made by amateurs dealt with subjects least exploited by the professional cinema. He mentioned the local newsreel, the historical documentary and local documentary, scientific films, films of natural history subjects, microscopic subjects and medical films, educational films, propaganda films. In conclusion, he described the work of the National Film Library of the British Film Institute, and suggested that there might be a section of the library for the distribution and preservation of outstanding amateur films.

The talk was followed by an exhibition of films which had been produced by amateurs or groups of amateurs.

THE GOVERNING BOARD

We announce with regret the resignation of Mr. Thomas Ormiston, C.B.E., from the Governing Board of the British Film Institute on which he had represented the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association. Although Mr. Ormiston did not support the establishment of the Cinematograph Fund when the Sunday Entertainments Act was being discussed in the House of Commons, he played an important part in the establishment of the Institute, and during the two years that he was a Governor he gave valuable advice and assistance in the work of the Institute.

Mr. W. R. Fuller, Secretary of the Cinematograph Exhibitors' Association, has been appointed a Governor of the Institute in place of Mr. Ormiston.

BRANCHES AND SOCIETIES

BECOTREE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : R. Gillion, Dagenham Adult Institute, St. George's Road, Dagenham, Essex.

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : C. Walker, "Eskdale," Old Shoreham Road, Southwick, Sussex.

The Sussex Section of the Branch has made arrangements for a programme of instructional films to be shown in January. This is in conjunction with the Education Committee of Brighton and arranged by the good offices of Mr. E. J. Hutchins, the Headmaster of Varndean School.

It is hoped to publish a local Film Guide this year, and arrangements are also being made for the first of what is hoped to be regular Sunday shows of unusual films in Brighton.

BRISTOL AND DISTRICT FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Rev. F. C. Vyvyan Jones, 16, West Park, Clifton, Bristol, 8.

The Bristol Branch paid a visit to a local Cinema on November 15th to see the film *Black Fury*. A discussion followed, and the high opinion of this production expressed in the Bulletin was endorsed. On December 5th the Branch met at the Royal Empire Society Rooms to hear Miss N. G. Hussey, of Gaumont-British, speak on "The Development of the Educational Sound Film."

CHICHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : G. A. Wilkins, "Glencarry," Orchard Avenue, Chichester.

The autumn meeting took the form of an exhibition of films produced by the Society, and the display was held on three successive evenings. Included in the programme was a film on the Jubilee celebrations in Chichester, and others which has been loaned by other Film Societies. They were greatly appreciated by members and public alike.

LEEDS FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : S. G. Crawford, 3, Hares Mount, Shepherds Lane, Leeds, 8.

LONDON FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Miss Olwen Vaughan, Brandis House, 92, Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4.

A large crowd of members and their friends attended the lecture given by Mr. Alistair Cooke on October 31st on "The Cinema in Journalism," when a specimen reel of *The March of Time* was shown.

The lecture on "Soviet Films," by Mr. Ivor Montagu, on Sunday afternoon, November 3rd, was also well attended; Lord Marley was in the chair. This lecture was arranged in conjunction with the season of Russian films being held at the Forum Cinema in Villiers Street.

The membership is growing, but the Society still needs large support to make its work worthwhile. For the coming season a course of ten lectures on "Films and Film Making" has been arranged with the Mary Ward Settlement, Tavistock Place, W.C.1. There are ten lectures which will be held on Wednesday evenings at 8 o'clock from

January 15th onwards. The course will be opened by Mr. Paul Rotha.

MANCHESTER FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : J. Norman Bamforth, 9, Chestnut Avenue, Chorlton-cum-Hardy, Manchester.

The Society began the new season with a meeting on October 25th, at which Mr. Percy Harris, Editor of *Home Movies and Home Talkies*, spoke on the Cultural Film. Mr. H. Pilkington Turner, head of the Extra-Mural Department of Manchester University, took the chair.

On November 29th, Professor T. H. Pear, Professor of Psychology at Manchester University, took the chair at a meeting on "The Educational Film," addressed by Miss Mary Field, M.A., Director of G.B. Instructional Ltd. There was an attendance of about 100-150 persons.

The members of the Society were invited to the Manchester Film Society's Annual Show of members' films on December 4th. The films shown included *Sewage*, the Society's film of the work of the Manchester Rivers Department, which had a special musical accompaniment, and a film of the work of Crumpsall Hospital.

Finally, on December 12th, the members of the Society attended a conference on films arranged by the National Council of Women at the G.P.O., at which the Hon. Mrs. R. H. Crawley, President of the National Council of Women, took the chair. After a showing of some of the G.P.O. films, including *Colour Box* and *Six-Thirty Collection*, a succession of speakers spoke on different aspects of film work. Mr. John Grierson afterwards delivered a fascinating address on the possibilities of publicity films of the type made by the G.P.O.

The Society's membership is now rapidly increasing, and the Manchester Film Society has become affiliated.

The next meeting will be held on January 24th, when Mr. Frank Tilley, publicity manager, Radio Pictures, Ltd., will speak on "Producers and Public—A Gap to be Bridged." On February 28th Mr. F. A. Hoare, Educational Consultant, Western Electric Company, will speak on "The Sound Film in the School," and on March 27th there will be a special show of 16 mm. films.

MERSEYSIDE FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : J. A. Parker, 5-6, Bluecoat Chambers, School Lane, Liverpool, 1.

Since the opening of the Season by Mr. William Farr in September, there has been a steady influx of new members.

The first private film show of the season was held in October, at which *Itto*, *Colour Box*, a Mickey Mouse and some interesting shorts were shown.

Miss Mary Field has given a lecture, with illustrations, on "The Technique of the Non-Fictional Film," and a large audience gave her an enthusiastic welcome.

An exhibition of British documentary films held at the Society's Rooms included *Rising Tide* and *B.B.C.*, *Droitwich*; and three lectures have been given in a series on directors and producing units, Professor Lyon Bleas having spoken on "Walt Disney," Ingram Knowles on "The Modern Russian Cinema," and Cyril Ray on "Hecht and MacArthur." This series of lectures is to be renewed after the New Year. The second private film show was given on December 13th, when *Three Songs of Lenin*, *Song of Ceylon*, and *Kaleidoscope* were shown.

Propaganda lectures to some dozen Societies have been given by Mr. J. Alex. Parker (Secretary), Mr. Cyril Ray, Mr. H. Houghton, Vice-Principal of Liverpool Collegiate School, and by Mr. F. Heming Vaughan (Chairman.)

In connection with the Schools (Secondary) Film Institute Society, a Lecture was given by Miss Mary Field on Film Appreciation with Film Illustrations to a large gathering of members at the David Lewis Theatre, on November 8th. Two audiences of members were shown British documentary films at the Society's Rooms on November 29th.

Interesting experiments are going on in connection with the elementary schools. Mr. Hodge, a member of the Society, has organised a series of educational films for the scholars of a group of schools in the Wavertree district at a local cinema. Another experiment has been conducted by the Chairman in association with the Head Teachers of four schools in South Liverpool.

NORTHERN IRELAND FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : W. H. Welply, O.B.E., Rantalard, Whitehouse, Belfast.

On the 26th November, a semi-public meeting, open to members and their guests, was held in the Locksley Hall, (Carlton Restaurant), Belfast. Mr. Bonaparte Wyse, who was in the chair, gave a brief sketch of the history and functions of the British Film Institute, after which the Rev. R. Nichol Cross initiated a discussion on films, with special reference to *David Copperfield*, *The Little Minister*, *Les Misérables*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, etc. New members of the Branch were enrolled following the meeting.

SALFORD FILM INSTITUTE SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Dr. J. Bradley, 8, Acton Square, Salford.

The Salford Branch, which was formed in the Autumn of 1934, remains a small enthusiastic body of persons engaged in education, who foresee the advantage to be gained by the correct use of the film as an adjunct to teaching.

In January 1935, it organised a demonstration of educational films in the large hall of the Royal Technical College, which was placed at the Branch's disposal for a week. Over 1,000 invitations were issued to teachers, and to the scholars of secondary schools. Gaumont-British Instructional supplied the equipment and operators, and Miss Locket was present to demonstrate and supervise. The result revealed the difficulties to be overcome and has cleared the way for a wiser course to be pursued if the Branch is to attain the object for which it was formed, i.e., the introduction of the film into the school as an instrument of education.

The interval since then has been occupied with investigation and experiment.

SCOTTISH FILM COUNCIL, Interim Hon. Sec. : C. A. Oakley, 188, Hyndland Road, Glasgow, W.2.

During the last three months, the Scottish Film Council has begun the publication of its monthly Bulletin, which has already achieved a circulation of 5,200. It includes the recommendations of the Entertainment Panel on films which it thinks the Scottish public should endeavour to see. So far its recommendations have been *Becky Sharp*, *Escape Me Never*, *The Informer*, *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, *Alice Adams*, *Anna Karenina*, *Black Fury*, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*, *Barbary Coast*, *Dr. Socrates*, and *Turn of the Tide*. The Education Panel has almost completed its scheme for reviewing educational films and a co-ordinating committee has been appointed consisting of four members of the Scottish Educational Film Association, two from the Universities, one from the Teachers' Training Colleges, and one from the Technical Colleges. The Children's Saturday Morning Matinees organised in Edinburgh have been very successful, 8,000 children attending the first four performances. The membership of the Scottish Educational Film Association is now approximately 1,500, and this, in addition to the 2,600 persons who are estimated to be members of Scottish Film Societies, indicates the progress being made in developing the cinema in Scotland. There are also, of course, the enthusiasts who are members of amateur cine societies, and the work of their year will reach its peak on 18th January when the Scottish Film Council holds its Amateur Film Festival in the Lyric Theatre, Glasgow. Mr. John Grierson will be adjudicator and there are indications that the audience will approach 1,000 in number. The Social Service Panel organised a private meeting in the Grand Hotel, Glasgow, between members of social service organisations and the cinema trade on the subject of showing unsuitable films to children.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Sec. : H. S. Coles, 3, Cambridge Terrace, Norton-on-Tees.

The Society has shown the following films this season: October: *Maskerade*, *Ship of the Ether*, *Trip to Davy Jones Locker*, *Un Tour dans la Lune*, and *King Neptune*. November: *Charlemagne*, *How Talkies Talk*, *Colour Box*, *Industrial Britain*, and *Noah's Ark*. December: *Hey-Rup De Lichtdief*, *Heute Grosse Dampferfahrt*, and *Pied Piper*. On January 22nd *Deutschland zwischen Gestern und Heute* will

be shown. The first two performances of the season attracted record attendances for the Branch, namely, 1,130 and 1,190.

BIRMINGHAM FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Mrs. R. C. Knight, 21, Carpenter Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, 15.

The Society has opened the season at the West End Cinema, Birmingham, and three meetings have already been held. The films shown include René Clair's *Le Dernier Milliardaire*, *Dood Water*, *Remous*, *Colour Box* and *Kaleidoscope*.

The Society was approached by the Midland Adult School Union and asked for help in interesting its members in good films. One lecture has been given on "What is a good film?" at a joint meeting and others are to be given later in the season. The newly-formed Wolverhampton Film Society is working in close co-operation with the Birmingham Society and many members of the society attended its opening meeting in October.

CATHOLIC FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Miss Joan O'Sullivan, 36, Great Smith Street, Westminster, S.W.1.

Monthly meetings of the Society are held every first Wednesday at the Millicent Fawcett Hall. The films shown are usually preponderantly religious. Lectures are given on the art of Film.

The activities of the Society comprise three units: Production, Projection and Miming. It is hoped shortly also to include a Cartoon Unit. The Production Unit has given demonstrations of Catholic films in many parts of London and the Provinces.

A meeting of the Society was held on January 8th, when Rev. Fr. Alfred Pike, O.P., lectured on *The Monks of the Charterhouse*, with film illustration.

CHILDREN'S FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Miss C. Winifred Harley, The Everyman Theatre, Hampstead, N.W.3.

The last three performances will be on January 18th, February 15th and March 14th. With the co-operation of the Divisional Inspector and the District Inspector of Hampstead, the Children's Film Society programme is given at 9-15 in the morning to children from L.C.C. Schools who pay 3d. each at the box office and present a special ticket obtained at the school. Owing to the splendid work of Mr. S. T. King, Headmaster of Haverstock Central School for Boys, this scheme has been very successful. Miss Mary Field and Mr. Humphrey Jennings of Gaspar-colour have given talks to the children.

CINEMA CHRISTIAN COUNCIL, Secretary : T. H. Baxter, 59, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

The Cinema Christian Council is steadily pursuing its way, enlarging its representation, surveying the field for its future operations, making new contacts with those interested in the development of the use of religious films. A production unit has been formed and a large Hall rented and fitted up as a studio with an ample supply of light. "Shooting" the first film has commenced, and it is hoped to produce a series of short sub-standard films to be used in churches and mission halls. It is believed that a new technique for such films will evolve as the unit settles down to work.

FILM SOCIETY OF GLASGOW, Hon. Sec. : D. Paterson Walker, 127, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.2.

The Society, whose membership now totals 824, continues to meet in Cranston's Picture House. The experiment of having afternoon and evening shows has been continued and is meeting with good success.

The following films were shown at the first meeting: *Dawn to Dawn*, *Der Schimmelreiter*, *Quiet of the Country*; and at the second meeting: *Nights of St. Petersburg*, *Night on the Bare Mountain*, *Physical Education (No. 1)*, *Birds of a Feather*. A lecture has also been given by C. A. Oakley on the German Cinema. Other meetings arranged are as follows: December 15th: *Unfinished Symphony*, *The Temporary Widow*, *Kaleidoscope*, *Ship of the Ether*. December 22nd: *Lac Aux Dames*, *Song of Ceylon*, *We Take off our Hats*.

Miss Marjorie Locket of Gaumont British and Mr. John Grierson are to give lectures early in the new year.

THE FRIENDS' HALL AND WALTHAMSTOW SETTLEMENT FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : Stanley Birchby, Friends' Hall and Walthamstow Settlement, Greenleaf Road, E.17.

The aim of this Society which has recently been formed is to encourage the presentation of films of high artistic and technical merit and to stress the important part the Cinema can play in the education of this generation. At the opening meeting held on Saturday, 23rd November, Mr. W. Farr of the British Film Institute spoke, and Kameradschaft and other films were shown.

LEICESTER FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : E. Irving Richards, Vaughan College, Leicester.

The Leicester Film Society's programmes of the season have included the following films:—October 26th: *Dood Water*, *Ship of the Ether*. November 23rd: *Ces Messieurs de la Santé*, *High Hazard*, and *Colour Box*. On November 30th a lecture was given by Ivor Montagu on "Sound and Colour."

MAIDENHEAD FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Sec. : S. J. Clippingdale Watsham, 27, High Street, Maidenhead, Berks.

At the first performance of the Maidenhead Film Society, on October 20th, the following were among the films shown:—*Weather Forecast*, *Das Gestohlene Herz*, *Ces Messieurs de la Santé*. The second performance was held on November 10th, and the programme included *Song of the Seine*, *Six-Thirty Collection*, *Der Traumende Mund*.

MANCHESTER AND SALFORD WORKERS' FILM SOCIETY, The Secretary, 86, Hulton Street, Salford, 5.

On October 26th the Society presented a programme of films which included *Men and Jobs*, *Night on the Bare Mountain*, *Das Gestohlene Herz*. Performances have hitherto been given on Saturdays, but a proposal to move them to Sundays is being considered.

MISSIONARY FILM COMMITTEE, Secretary : T. H. Baxter, 59, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1.

The Missionary Film Committee has carried through some very successful showings of its films during the last three months. The new venture *Beginning at Jerusalem* a composite film, has proved especially attractive. At Belfast about 12,000 visited it. The 16mm. films have been in constant demand. There is a heavy programme ahead and both standard and sub-standard are heavily booked. Preparations are proceeding for the new India film.

NORTH LONDON FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secretary : H. A. Green, 6, Carysfort Road, London, N.16.

The North London Film Society commenced its second season of Sunday film performances on December 1st at the Monseigneur News Theatre, Piccadilly, W. The two features in the programme were *Vampyr*, directed by Carl Dreyer, and Basil Wright's *Song of Ceylon*.

On Friday, December 6th, a meeting of the Society was held at the Central Y.M.C.A., at which Basil Wright discussed his film *Song of Ceylon* and its relation to the modern documentary film.

These are the two latest films made by British National Films, under the auspices of the Religious Film Society. The first tells the story of how a headmaster's lesson to "stick it out" is taken to heart by two of his boys when they have left the school. One of them, a missionary in a remote African station, is fighting an outbreak of plague among the natives almost single-handed. Another pupil succeeds with difficulty in fighting a way through to him with the drugs so urgently needed.

The main theme—the African mission events—complete with wiles of witch-doctor; hostile tribesmen slinging assegais, closing in on warriors on mission hospital—all might have fitted the case two generations back, but hardly to-day. However, the aeroplane's arrival with serum supplies, in the nick of time, is up-to-date enough—and thrilling, too.

The photography and lighting are quite good, and the African settings effective on the whole.

The programme for January 5th included *Zero de Conduite*, (Jean Vigo), *Rien que les Heures*, (Cavalcanti), and *Tusalava*, (Len Lye's first cartoon film).

On Friday, January 10th Cavalcanti gave a lecture to the Society on "The Avant-Garde Movement." Future speakers will include Andrew Buchanan (President of the North London Film Society), Ivor Montagu and Robert Herring (film critic of the *Manchester Guardian* and editor of *Life and Letters To-day*).

RELIGIOUS FILM SOCIETY, Gen. Secretary : Rev. Stanley W. Edwards, 4, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

Since the beginning of the winter season, some twenty Churches and Missions have been equipped with projectors and have begun using films in connection with their work.

A sixty-four page Film List and Book of Information has been prepared, which is to be issued free to the Members of the Guilds of Light, and which will be available to non-members at the price of 1s. (post free 1s. 3d.).

Two new films entitled *Service* and *The Common Round* have been produced and will be available for use in the New Year. (See below)

Special consideration is being given to the matter of closer co-operation with the Cinema Christian Council and the Missionary Film Committee.

TYNESIDE FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secretary, c/o The Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

The Spring Session of the Tyneside Film Society will open on January 26th with an exhibition of films in the Haymarket Theatre. The other Sunday evening exhibitions arranged for this Session will take place on February 16th, March 8th, and March 29th. The films to be shown will be selected from the following:—*Three Songs of Lenin*, *The Deserter*, *Jazz Comedy*, *Unfinished Symphony*, (German version), *Refugees*, *The Triumph of the Will*, *The Great Train Robbery*, *The Voice of Britain*, *The Face of Britain*, *Shipyard*, *Rising Tide*, *Wharves and Strays*, *Men and Jobs*, *For All Eternity*, *Light Rhythms*, *Border Line*, *Beautiful Austria*, *The Idea*, and colour shorts made by various processes. Discussion on the films shown will be held in the club room on the Tuesday evening following each exhibition.

The Society's other activities will include Saturday morning matinees for children, arranged in conjunction with the Modern Language Association.

WOLVERHAMPTON FILM SOCIETY, Hon. Secs. : Programme, E. L. Packer, 15, Merridale Road, Wolverhampton ; Membership, P. W. Hyde, 78, Belmont Road, Wolverhampton.

The Society commenced its first season on November 8th at the West End Cinema when *Le Quatorze Juillet*, *Song of Ceylon*, and *Pett and Pott* were shown. The second meeting was held on December 4th for the exhibition of *The Road to Life*, *Rain*, and *The King's English*. Future meetings have been arranged for January 8th, February 5th, March 4th, and April 8th, 1936, when it is hoped to show *Der Traumende Mund*, *Liebelei*, *Emperor Jones*, *Jazz Comedy*, and *Charlماغne*.

THE COMMON ROUND. 35 mm. Sound. 4 reels. 40 mins.

Director : Stephen Harrison.

Distributors : Religious Film Society.

SERVICE. 35 mm. sound. 3 reels. 30 mins.

Director : T. Aveling Ginever.

Distributors : Religious Film Society.

The other film tells how a lad endeavours, with the help of a certain blind man, to dedicate his life to the service of Christ. The first time he meets temptation, he fails; but his conscience gives him no peace till he has made restitution, and his experiences leave him strengthened for a further endeavour to live a life of service.

The main setting—a down-town mission club—is pretty true to life, as are the types of men frequenting the place. The blind Superintendent, with an uncanny insight into men and things, is convincing. His obvious sincerity, coupled with his handicap, go far to silence the critic disposed to condemn his tendency to exhort on occasion.

The lad is likeable but alternates just a bit too violently between weak vacillation and a surprising decisiveness and self-assertion. Still, in real life stranger things than these happen daily; and this is near enough to fact to make quite an impressive "short story." Intentionally didactic, it succeeds in making its points without "preachiness." A. C. H.

TECHNICAL AND TRADE REVIEWS

A METHOD OF DETERMINING THE
CONSTANCY OF SOUND FILM MOTION

By S. R. Eade, A.M.I.E.E., of the British Thomson Houston Research Laboratory

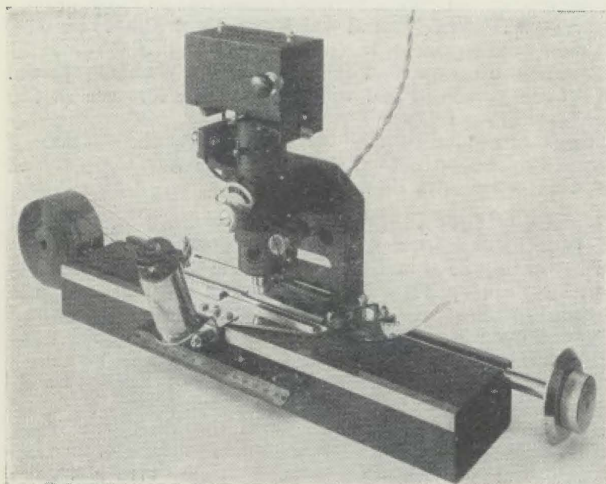


Fig. 1.—Micro-densitometer for analysing sound track

ONE of the most difficult problems confronting the motion picture engineer since the advent of sound in the cinema has been to design and build mechanism which will ensure the necessary constancy of motion of cinematographic film in recorders, reproducers, printers, and associated apparatus. This problem has been made even more difficult by the lack of suitable methods and apparatus of sufficient precision to allow quantitative measurements to be made during experimental and development work. For this reason it has been usual to regard the ear as the only satisfactory means of determining the success of any particular design. An aural test in which standing waves are developed in a long, narrow room, with the observer at a considerable distance from the sound source is considerably used, and has proved to be a particularly sensitive test.

Measuring constancy of motion

In the design of continuous optical reduction printers, the problem is even more difficult owing to the necessity for propelling two separate films with great constancy at their correct relative speeds. During recent work of this nature carried out in the Research Laboratory of the British Thomson Houston Co., Ltd., two interesting methods of measurement have been evolved, and a description of the method and apparatus may prove of interest to other workers in this field.

It is not proposed to discuss here the design of constant motion film driving mechanism, but it may be mentioned that, in general, it is the modern practice to propel the film initially by means of a sprocket whose teeth engage the film perforations, this sprocket being driven from the remainder of the mechanism through a mechanical filter system to absorb irregularities in the drive due to gears, chains, and the like. The motion imparted to the film by the sprocket is not sufficiently constant for our purpose owing to the fact that film shrinks irregularly and the pitch of the sprocket teeth cannot be made to fit exactly the pitch of the film perforations for more than a very short period in the life of any film. It becomes necessary, therefore, to include a second mechanical filter system before or at the recording or reproducing point to take care of this irregularity and irregularities introduced by the slight manufacturing tolerances which must be allowed on the various parts of the mechanical system. To emphasise the nature of this work, it may be stated that displacements of 0.001 in. are of great importance, and in modern apparatus the motion of the film is held constant to within limits of ± 0.0001 in. of its correct position at any instant.

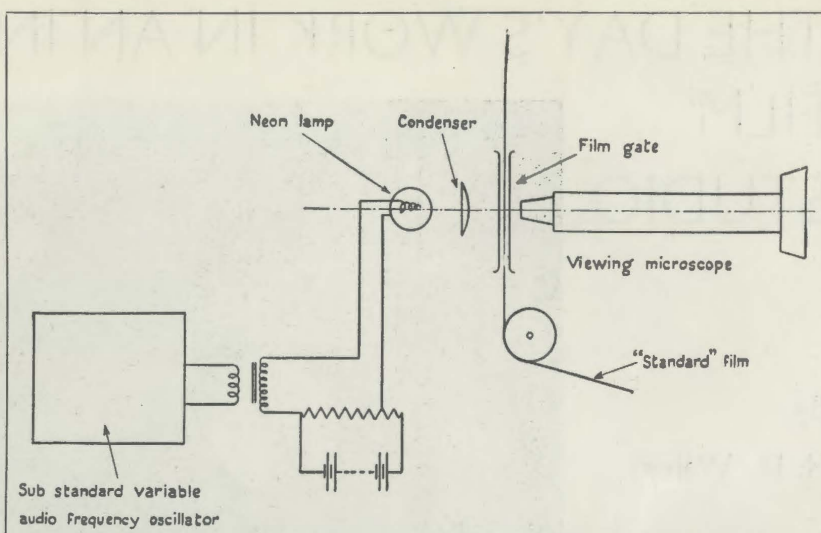
Method and apparatus used

In the testing method to be described, the first apparatus to be considered is the 35 mm. sound recording camera. This was checked by actually recording in the camera a length of constant frequency track of, say, 2,000 cycles per second, the audio frequency signal being obtained from a sub-standard oscillator of proved accuracy. The recorded track was then analysed by means of the micro-densitometer shown in Fig. 1. This instrument, which was designed for the purpose, consists essentially of an optical system and illuminant to throw a scanning beam upon the track, and a micrometer propelled table to carry the film beneath the scanning beam. This table is mounted on ball-bearing slides, and it is possible to measure the table

position accurately to $\frac{1}{10000}$ part of an inch. The

scanning beam passing through the track falls upon a photo-sensitive cell, the current through which is arranged to deflect a mirror type suspension galvanometer, with an effective scale length of 2 metres. The current of the scanning source is also measured

Fig. 2



by a galvanometer of equal accuracy and maintained constant by a slide wire.

By means of this apparatus it is possible to make measurements of track density to within one part in 1,000 or, as in the present case, to measure the wave lengths of successive cycles of a constant frequency note recorded on the track. In this way, the accuracy of motion of the recording camera was checked and some lengths of constant frequency film of known accuracy were obtained. This film was also checked by the more usual method of "fold back," as the accurate checking of long lengths by the densitometer becomes a laborious process.

This "standard" film was then used to check the motion of other apparatus by a stroboscopic method. The film was propelled through the mechanism in the usual way, and at the inspection point a neon lamp was rigidly fixed behind the film and a viewing microscope in front. The neon lamp was illuminated for short periods at a frequency equal to that of the note recorded upon the standard film, and thus an apparently stationary image of the track was seen, any inconstancy in the film propulsion being evident as a movement of the image.

The circuit used to excite the neon lamp is shown in Fig. 2. It will be seen that the initial source is an audio-frequency oscillator. This was a sub-standard instrument of known constancy. Its output of about 3 watts was stepped up, by means of the transformer shown, to give an R.M.S. voltage of about 80. The output of this transformer was taken to the neon lamp with a D.C. source of about

40 volts in series. The lamp was thus illuminated once each cycle, and the time of illumination could be readily varied by changing the ratio of the audio frequency voltage and the D.C. biasing source. The area of the film scanned was 0.1 in. square.

By means of this apparatus it has been found possible to make quick and accurate investigations on all matters relating to continuous film propulsion, the method being sufficiently accurate to bring to light various troubles which were barely perceptible to a trained observer on the usual listening test. In the case of comparatively fast disturbances, such as sprocket tooth ripple, it has been found useful to run the apparatus at well below its usual speed and to employ a standard film having a recorded frequency considerably higher (e.g., 10 times) than the frequency of disturbance under investigation. This can be used as a first approximation, as any disturbance will be more easily noticed, but the test must afterwards be made at normal speed to permit the correct operation of mechanical filters, etc. At normal speed such disturbances as sprocket ripple will be evident as a lack of definition in the image.

On November 18th, 1935, Mr. Louis Levy delivered a lecture to the British Kinematograph Society on modern methods of musical synchronisation. Many in the audience were surprised to learn how largely synthetic the sound on most musical films has become. In appearance the singers sing and the dancers dance to the accompaniment of a full orchestra. In fact, however, the singer's face and the song, the dancing and the orchestra have all been recorded on separate occasions. This enables the photography and recording to be carried out under the best possible conditions for each subject. In early days voice and orchestra were recorded on the stage during the shooting of the picture, but this made excessive demands on the capacity of the stage and it was found impossible to preserve tonal balance among the different instruments. The method favoured by Mr. Levy is to carry out the preliminary stages of the work, the recording, that is to say, of singing or dancing—with the accompaniment of a piano only. Incidentally, extreme accuracy of pitch is necessary in the piano used—in fact, it was found desirable to tune it twice a day.

With regard to the orchestra the "playback" method is

FITTING MUSIC TO THE FILM

largely used. First the music is recorded without any picture of the players being taken. Subsequently the record is "played back" through a sound head and speaker to give the tempo to a "dummy" orchestra. Needless to say the dummy orchestra must be capable of musicians playing from the actual score of the original recording. Mr. Levy showed several scenes from *First a Girl*, and explained the technical methods by which the results were obtained. In one scene the first procedure was the recording of the voice alone with a soft piano accompaniment to give the singer tempo and pitch. Also for the dance numbers a piano track alone was first made and then used for the dance rehearsal and shots to give rhythm and tempo. This enabled the director to enjoy freedom from sound limitations. Afterwards the complete film was assembled and cut in conjunction with the musical department. There being in this method two complete sound-tracks, one of the voice and one of the orchestra, lack of balance between them could be rectified by re-mixing at different levels as often as desired without the necessity of calling the orchestra together again.

H. D. W.

THE DAY'S WORK IN AN INSTRUCTIONAL FILM STUDIO

By

H. D. Waley



Editing a Nature Film. Note the Moviola in the background and Film-rack on extreme left

PRODUCERS of entertainment films have shown no great aversion to giving their public—in the person of the Press Film Correspondent—frequent glimpses behind the scenes, and probably most people nowadays have a more accurate idea of the interior of a film-studio than of the back-stage aspect of an ordinary theatre. Nevertheless the information which appears in the Press in this manner aims naturally enough at supplying amusement rather than information, and it has occurred to me that there might be those who would welcome an attempt to analyse one day's work at a studio soberly and in some detail.

In the first place the building has to be warmed and cleaned. For this the resident caretaker, who stokes a boiler with skill acquired in the Navy, and his wife are responsible. The next requisite at a film studio is plenty of electricity, and by nine each morning the electricians have started up the generator, which has a capacity of 100 kilowatts at 110 volts. For the rest of the day a series of parallel activities pursue their course throughout the building, various according to the nature of each film and the stage of existence which it has reached.

Shooting on the main "set"

On the main set a film is being shot which is a mixture of dietetic propaganda and cooking instruction. The plan of the set may be described as a T laid on its back if one imagines a T with a short stem and an exaggerated cross-stroke. The stem of the T is a partition wall (containing a door) between a kitchen and a sitting-room. This central partition is about 10 ft. long and each of the back

walls of the "rooms" which it separates are about 15 ft. long. About 16 kw. of lighting was used on this set for normal shots, about eight for close-ups.

Shooting continued on this set throughout the day with two breaks while scene-shifting went on, and lots of short pauses while details were discussed and rehearsed. Nevertheless, by the end of the day 1,500 feet of film had been exposed, of which some 800 would probably be actually used. That is to say, that about nine hours' studio work resulted in material for about nine minutes' projection. Such a proportion compares, of course, very favourably with that obtained while producing the average entertainment film, where everything is on a larger scale. I was struck, however, by the patient attention paid to artistic detail, even in a work-a-day film of this type. On account of trifling defects, which a less exacting standard would have tolerated, there were ten retakes for faults of action, nine for faults of intonation, and four for wrong dialogue.

Practical problems were created by the tendency of nail-heads to show through distemper, the tendency of picture-glass to reflect back the glare of the lamps, and the tendency of any solid object to get just in front of some other more important solid object at the crucial moment. The persons actually engaged on this bit of production were as follows:

Five actors and a make-up man, one director, one cameraman with two assistants, one sound-cameraman in an upper room, with one assistant with him and one in a portable booth near the set, four electricians, one scene-shifter, and an occasional carpenter or painter, as required.

Editing an instructional film

In other parts of the building work was proceeding simultaneously on four other films—a Nature film about Seagulls, an optical film about Eyesight, a propaganda film about Road Safety, and a documentary film about Coal. The Seagull film was in course of being edited. Bird films, of course, cannot be photographed in accordance with any very strict schedule, so that the Editor necessarily receives from the Cameraman a mass of film without much predetermined logical structure. A preliminary viewing in the projection theatre suggests to the Editor the main outlines of the film's final pattern, and the film is then broken up into sequences with the aid of the Moviola—a miniature peep-show version of a projector. Near the Moviola stands a long rack with numbered pegs. The hanging of a film-strip on to one of these pegs represents a very crucial step in its progress towards finality (see illustration). The little coils of film lying about on the flat top of the Moviola are detached units. As soon as one of these units is slung to a peg its position relative to the strips hung from the neighbouring pegs is fixed, for the next step is that the cutting-room staff join the strips together in the order indicated on the pegs. A trial projection is made from the resultant version, and if necessary the Moviola and rack are again called into use. The form of the film is thus hammered out until it is ready for the addition of commentary and sound effects (assuming that there has been no simultaneous sound-recording when the picture was taken). During the day under consideration the seagulls were in course of progress from projection theatre to Moviola and back. In a corner of the main studio diagram work was being carried out for the film on "Vision." The diagram represented a cross-section of the human eye, and the desired effects of movement were being obtained by a combination of opaque "cut-outs" and ink drawings on celluloid. Diagram work is necessarily very slow, and a few feet only can be completed each day. Not far from the diagram-making apparatus hung a large map of London. Studded with little flags, it looked from the distance like a war-map, but proved to be connected only with that most innocent of wars, the war against traffic accidents. Each flag represented a recent accident. In some spots the flags almost crowded each other out, though the task of taking the flags from a tray and planting them on the map was still in progress.

The documentary film on Coal was passing through the stage of assimilating a blend of sound-tracks combining the commentary of the commentator, the commentaries of individual miners and the natural noises of the mine.

The projection theatre

The projection theatre is not only used for editing purposes, but also for a variety of miscellaneous necessary shows. On this particular day some very beautiful views of crystals being precipitated from solution were tried out, and a reel of School Physical Training film was run

through for special viewers. The projection theatre employs two operators.

In spite of all efforts to be compendious I find that there are at least half-a-dozen more individuals whose work, though necessary to the studio, has been here taken for granted, and not particularised. The attempt to describe even one day's work from every angle would indeed have swelled this article to encyclopædic bulk. Naturally, also, there were many would-be workers immobilised by weather or other uncontrollable causes. The inevitability of this is, of course, one of the factors which force up the costs of film production. In fact, above the door of every film studio should be written—no, not the world's best-known tag, "Leave hope behind . . .," but the world's second best-known tag, "They also serve"

TECHNICAL PROGRESS

DURING THE YEAR

THE year 1935 has not seen any striking novelty come into commercial practice. Colour processes have progressed steadily both in professional and amateur practice, but there has been nothing to justify the sensational clamour of the press predicting immediate revolutions in this sphere. **Becky Sharp**—the film round which the press agitation centred—obtained the reception it deserved, a mixture of gratified curiosity and mild enthusiasm, but producers in this country have very sensibly refrained from being stampeded into an orgy of competitive colour. The Kodachrome tripack subtractive process, which is shortly to become available to users of 16 mm. film, has been demonstrated to be capable of very fine results at its best. Its drawback is the extreme accuracy of processing required to produce these results, and the day when duplicate prints will be obtainable from Kodachrome originals is not yet in sight. Stereoscopy for the cinema theatre stays where it has long been, and is likely to stay indefinitely, just round the corner. Those who step off the gangways of trans-Atlantic liners and greet the reporters with the news that "stereoscopy is the next move," are presumably obeying the promptings of vague optimism rather than drawing on precise technical knowledge.

The advent of television, on the other hand, is a very real and immediate prospect. Indeed, the sellers of home projection apparatus are said to feel that the business has been adversely affected by the public's hopes for home television. The film theatre owners are also vaguely unsettled by uncertainty as to what new developments television on theatre-size scale may bring in its train. In fact, as is well known, the Gaumont Company has taken the bull by the horns and acquired an interest in television. It is, of course, just possible that television may prove less important in either of these spheres than is now anticipated. Most home projection is, after all, a very personal affair, for the owner of a projector cannot long hold out against the temptation to buy a camera. And, as for television of current events, is the public really so impatient for hot news that it must at all costs watch what is happening while it actually happens? Can it not possibly wait the few hours which elapse while an aeroplane carries films to London (if the event is far off, which it often isn't) and the incredibly swift marvels of modern processing take place? It may turn out, when the novelty of television has worn off, and it takes its proper place in the order of things, that some of the apprehensions which have perturbed the cinema trade this year have been needless. Even so it is probable that the most important technical work of 1935 affecting the film has been the research work which is laying the basis of commercial-scale television.

The light-sources available for projection may, it is true, be revolutionised at some future date by developments of the high-pressure mercury lamp. The Philips company have already obtained very interesting results in this direction with their experimental "Philora" lamp, a high-intensity light source of small area extremely free from time-lag in its lighting-up and extinction. But these prospects are at present somewhat speculative. In fact, 1935 has been a year of research carried on behind the scenes rather than of novelties reaching the public.

H. D. W.

NEW APPARATUS

Viewed by H. D. Waley

S.P. 16-mm. PROJECTOR VANS
SALES PRODUCERS, LTD., 13, Golden Square, London, W.1

In connection with their contract for the dissemination of National Government propaganda the S.P. Projector Company have designed and equipped a number of vans containing all the apparatus and accessories required for staging a show in any hall, whether mains electricity is available or not. These vans are available for all occasions on which it is desired to fit up a temporary "talkie" show, and it is anticipated that use will be made of them both by religious and educational interests. The vans themselves have been made by the Singer Company. The engines are 10 h.p. and the bodies have been specially designed for the purpose in hand. The equipment consists of 2 "Wundatone" projectors, 2 folding projector stands, a screen 9 ft. by 12 ft., a gramophone for non-synchronous musical interludes, a microphone to enable spoken commentaries, announcements and addresses to be given, black cloths to cover windows during daylight performances, a splicing and re-winding board, "exit" signs, a fire extinguisher, a sand-bucket, a rotary converter and a petrol-driven generator. The driver-operator is thus fully equipped for giving a show in any hall under all conceivable conditions. Vans of this type must not, of course, be confused with the more familiar type of van which mounts a transparent screen at its rear and gives outdoor shows of varying visibility, relying on arc lamps and 35 mm. film to fight down the daylight.

B.I.F. 16 mm. SOUND-ON-FILM PROJECTOR. British Instructional Films, Ltd. (Pathe Pictures, Ltd.), 103-109, Wardour Street, London, W.C.2. French Model, £135.

On November 7th a very convincing demonstration was given at the Rialto Cinema of the French 16 mm. S.o.F. projector now to be marketed in this country by British Instructional Films, Ltd. The sound was quite excellent, both in volume and quality. At a throw of some 70 feet a picture 10 feet wide was thrown on a silvered screen, and left nothing to be desired in the matter of steadiness, definition and brilliancy. I was given an opportunity of testing the light output and found it to be in the neighbourhood of 200 lumens. The lamp used is the 110 volt 750 watt type. The projector will take either S.M.P.E. or D.I.N. film, and its method of adaptation is ingenious and quite unique. The gate is furnished with two claw-channels—one on each side. In these run a double claw-assembly so designed that when pushed back inside one channel it protrudes from the other. As far as the intermittent movement and the picture are concerned, therefore, the difference between the two standards is met by a single adjustment which is extremely quick and simple to carry out. There remains, of course, the fact that the top and bottom sprockets and the sound gate are now wrong way round. This is simply met by running the film with a twist both above and below the gate. I was assured that no undue strain had been observable from this method of running.

DANCE KAUFMANN "CYCLE" FILMS

The Dance Kaufmann "cycle" films are now being distributed by Steuart Films Ltd., Chelmsford Studios, North Fambridge, Essex.

R.C.A. PHOTOPHONE 16-mm. PICTURE REVERSING ATTACHMENT, R.C.A. PHOTOPHONE, LTD., Electra House, Victoria Embankment, London, W.C.2

This attachment is a simple device for reversing the picture from left to right as required when showing films made to D.I.N. standards on the R.C.A. 16 mm. projectors. It has one important advantage over mirrors and right-angle prisms—it is not necessary to alter the position of the projector in relation to the screen. In consequence, a mixed programme of S.M.P.E. and D.I.N. films can be projected by simply slipping the attachment into position as required.

The size and position of the picture on the screen remains unaltered, and there is no "double image," lack of definition, or colouration, whilst the light loss is very small.

The front of the projector case is equipped with a socket to take the picture reversal device, and a quick action clamp enables the unit to be held rigidly in position or easily removed by a quarter turn of a small knob.

At present the attachment is designed to work with any lens from 1½ in. to 2½ in. focus, but attachment for longer focus lenses can be made to order.

"EUMIG" PROJECTORS

The Austrian "Eumig" Projectors have been recently introduced into this country by Messrs. Actina, of 29, Red Lion Square, W.C. Three models are made taking 8mm., 9/5mm., and 16mm. film respectively. All are priced at £29 10s. and are identical in general build. The machines have an ingenious device for keeping the film in contact with the top and bottom sprocket wheels which considerably simplifies the act of threading-up. The film is simply pressed down on to the sprockets between two spring side-grips which close again over it of their own accord. Stills and reverse showing are provided for. An approximate light test showed an output of 36 lumens. Normally, 250 watt lamps of mains voltage are used, but provision is made for plugging in a transformer into the lamp circuit. The motor-resistance is incorporated in the base.

"CINESCOPE" FILM-SLIDE PROJECTORS, 10-12, Ivy Lane, London, E.C.4.

On November 20th M. Andre Van Remoortel, of Brussels, demonstrated a large range of film-slide projectors which he has designed and manufactured, and which are now to be marketed in this country. The smallest shown, employing a 50-watt lamp, gave a good picture 6 feet wide, and the largest, with a 500-watt lamp, is designed to show a 20-foot picture with a 120-foot throw, but there was not room in the hall to demonstrate this. Film-slides have certain definite advantages over ordinary glass lantern slides—they are less bulky to store, they are lighter and less fragile to travel with, and, above all, they are much cheaper. The demonstration gave rise to two interesting discussions. One concerned the relative advantages of continuous reels and separate film-slides. M. Van Remoortel was inclined to claim the preservation of a single set sequence of pictures, which the continuous reel ensures, to be an advantage, since it avoids the danger of slides appearing in accidental wrong order. Some members of the audience, however, joined issue with him on this point, and expressed preference for the separate slides, owing to the impossibility of composing an unalterable sequence equally suitable for all audiences. The single "Cinescope" slides are very neatly bound in metal, have a covering layer of acetate over the emulsion, and adequate space for a written description. The second point on which discussion arose was the possibility of colouring by hand originals of such small size. The hand-coloured originals shown on this occasion certainly left much to be desired in the matter of accurate outline, and the problem is clearly a difficult one. The question was also raised as to the horizontal versus the vertical position for running the film. All the models shown, except the cheaper ones, were capable of running the film in either method. It appears to be a point where standardisation is desirable, in order to simplify the formation of slide libraries.

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The British Film Institute exists "to encourage the use and development of the cinematograph as a means of entertainment and instruction." Its objects are :—

1. To act as a clearing house for information on all matters affecting films at home and abroad particularly as regards education and general culture.
2. To influence public opinion to appreciate the value of films as entertainment and instruction.
3. To advise educational institutions and other organisations and persons on films and apparatus.
4. To link up the film trade and the cultural and educational interests of the country.
5. To encourage research into the various uses of the film.
6. To establish a national repository of films of permanent value.
7. To provide a descriptive and critical catalogue of films of educational and cultural value.
8. To advise Government Departments concerned with films.
9. To certify films as educational, cultural or scientific.
10. To undertake similar duties in relation to the Empire.

WHAT IT NEEDS

In pursuance of this programme the British Film Institute desires to secure the support of all bodies and individuals that have at heart the encouragement of the best type of film and the full development of the constructive uses of the cinema. Alike in the public cinema and in the schoolroom and lecture room, the film has a growing influence upon thought and action. The purpose of the British Film Institute is to encourage the best features of this influence and to draw together all those who are concerned in its exercise. A strong membership of the Institute will be a guarantee that this work is being worthily and fruitfully performed. You are invited to lend it your support either by subscribing as an individual or by inducing corporate organizations to which you belong to apply for membership.

It is proposed to form Branches of the Institute throughout the country. Information as to the necessary procedure to establish these will be forwarded on request.

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The Institute being a Company limited by guarantee it is necessary for intending members to fill up the form of application which will be found overleaf and forward it together with subscription for the year ending June 30th. A copy of the Memorandum and Articles of Association will be forwarded for perusal if desired. Corporate Bodies can become members of the Institute by paying an annual subscription of not less than £5 5s. Such subscribers would entitle the affiliated organization to commensurate privilege of membership.

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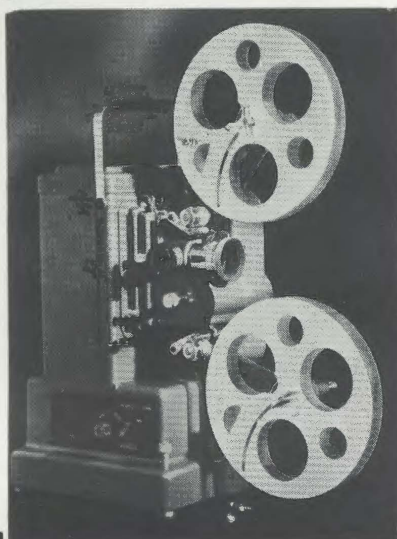
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